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OUTLINE LESSONS ON MORALS

OUTLINE LESSONS ON MORALS

BY

GERTRUDE MARTINEAU

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JUL 1881
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TO MY FORMER PUPILS,

AND STILL DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,

MARY, ELLEN, HELEN, CAROLINE, JESSIE,
AND ANNIE,

FOR WHOM THESE LESSONS WERE WRITTEN

AND BY WHOM THEY WERE SHARED,

THEY ARE NOW

AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

BY THEIR OLD FRIEND AND TEACHER.

PREFACE.

THIS little book is the result of a weekly lesson in a Sunday School with a class of elder girls. The subject for a lesson was chosen by one of the girls on one Sunday, and taken home, to be thought over during the week; and on the following Sunday, helped by questions and talk with teacher and companions, she gave her thoughts on the subject of the day, the lesson following chiefly the lines of the outline schemes here presented, which had been prepared during the week by the teacher as a guide, and as a thread to hang the lessons upon.

The great interest taken in the lessons by the pupils led me to think that these notes might help some other teachers, and they therefore appeared in *Teachers' Notes*, published by the Sunday School Association. They are now reprinted at the request

of some friends; with, however, the addition of a few lessons which have not appeared before. For those on Thanksgiving, Prayer, and Self-Consecration, I have most gratefully to acknowledge my indebtedness to Miss Cobbe, from whose chapters on those subjects in her book on "Religious Duty" I have made an abstract, hoping to bring some parts of her noble book thus within the reach and comprehension of my young pupils.

I am well aware that these pages contain nothing new; but I am assured that a little volume which may serve as a handbook for some teachers wishing to deal with moral subjects would be useful, and is much needed: and it is with the hope that the wants of some fellow teachers may be met by lesons which have given happy hours to my pupils and myself that I venture to send this little book into the world.

GERTRUDE MARTINEAU.

LONDON, 1881.

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OUTLINE LESSONS ON MORALS.

I.

CHARITY.

GRACE: an all-embracing graciousness springing out of a loving unselfishness.

Read the description of it in 1 Cor. xiii.

Charity includes:—

Readiness to see the best in every one: "believeth all things"—give credit for the best intentions till we know to the contrary, even when appearances seem to tell against it—in *acts*, when they fail—in *words*, when they are capable of two interpretations—in *manners* under similar conditions. "Thinketh no evil."

Tenderness to others' feelings, even when we are annoyed—overcoming a temptation to say annoying or hurting things; sympathy, putting one's self in the place of another and knowing how he would feel, "is kind."

Readiness to help: out of this springs the ordinary meaning of charity as between rich and poor. True "charity" of this kind is helping men to help themselves. Giving is not always charity. St. Paul: "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

Unselfishness: desiring others' good without thought of self. "Seeketh not her own."

Long-suffering: "is not easily provoked" (this is closely connected with the last), "suffereth long," bearing things one's self for the sake of others, or for the sake of saving others pain, and not letting others know that one suffers; "endureth all things," hardness, sorrow, repulse, etc., etc. "Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." Lingering feeling of dissatisfaction when something turns out differently from what we prophesied, because we are proved wrong. Sincere rejoicing in the *truth*. "Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things." Patience, God's patience with us—letting us work out our own blind way—and muddle on with backslidings and mistakes, when it is all clear to Him. This is an instance, the greatest, of *long-suffering*. He lets us make mistakes, that we may learn and remember: like a child, who learns by experience; it is better to let him meet with little accidents and make mistakes than to tell him everything—he would not remember.

Readiness or openness of heart, which prepares the

way for all the deepest love of which we are capable. A genial receptiveness of spirit is the *passive* part of charity, and a genuine desire for all that is best and highest for all men is the *active* part. A genuine desire must be active, and try to bring about its own fulfilment.

II.

CONSCIENTIOUSNESS.

OBEDIENCE to the conscience.

Conscience is the voice of God telling us to do what is good and to shun what is evil.

We are left free to obey or not to obey;—the choice is our own:—freewill. To obey is to be conscientious. But there are *degrees* of obedience and disobedience. To be *wholly* faithful to conscience is very difficult. The inner voice often tells us to do things most of all distasteful or terrible to us. (Instances: acknowledging a sin or fault:—children especially. Toussaint and Moyse, in "The Hour and the Man," by Harriet Martineau, vol. ii. ch. x. Standing out alone against something, and facing sneers or abuse, etc.) If we are faithful under these circumstances our conscientiousness is of the highest kind: for even if the trials look to others very small, yet if *to us* they were the most trying or terrible alternative that could present itself at that time, it may often be little less than heroism in us to be faithful to conscience. The claims that conscience makes on us may often be

very small, and fall in with what we wish: but it is necessary to be very careful not to deceive ourselves, and think that what we wish is what conscience demands of us, and not seek further. Easy to soothe ourselves into a sort of quiet by sophistries about our duty, (instances) numbing our consciences and putting them to sleep. If we do this, or if we cease to attend to conscience, it will gradually cease to speak, growing weaker and weaker till it fades altogether away. But if we follow it to the very uttermost that we can see, we shall see more and more clearly.

Following conscience also in things which are private to ourselves, and concern no one else. Claims on us for unselfishness in thought and feeling,—and charity, etc., etc.

Conscientiousness in work;—when no one is looking;—when no one would know who did it, and so we should not be blamed. A great deal of work is done unconscientiously. (Instances: Workmen laying drains badly. Consequences. Children cheating about learning lessons. Consequences of not really learning.)

Conscience forbids us to do wrong, and tells us to do right. We must obey in both these cases before we can be called conscientious.

See in "conscience money" a curious instance of the working of conscience.

III.

EARNESTNESS.

Earnestness implies singleness of purpose in our lives, and that we are capable of pursuing our purpose without regard to self, and without self-consciousness. A man who is thoroughly earnest throughout all his character and dealings shows that his purpose, which he pursues singly, is the True and Right.

Earnestness manifests itself in many ways. In fearlessness in the pursuit of duty,—in spite of ridicule,—of persecution,—of opposition of various kinds from people,—of hindrances from circumstances (not allowing ourselves to be overcome or defeated by difficulties or dangers);—missionaries,—nurses,—doctors,—in shipwreck or trouble. In perseverance, under the same circumstances. In patience; readiness to wait long, if need be, for the fulfilment of its desires; patience with others,—patience in overcoming all difficulties; patience even with oneself, most difficult of all. St. Francis de Sales says the question is whether we *consent* to evils, not whether we slip into them.

In forgetfulness of self:—for no one who has *himself* in his mind can be really earnest in anything except the gain of some things for himself,—which is not what we mean by earnestness in any good sense.

In thoughtfulness for others,—which follows naturally upon the former. It implies a certain deep-heartedness,—for shallow natures can hardly be *earnest* in any sense.

People may be earnest in a wrong cause as well as a right: earnest in persecution,—but then it is not the fault of the earnestness,—it is want of knowledge or sight. (As St. Paul.) The same quality of earnestness turned into an opposite channel may do wonders of good. Every man, whatever his cause or his work, must be a better man and have greater possibilities of good for being an earnest man, even if his earnestness leads him into some errors which he would not commit if he were not earnest. The errors belong to the judgment and not to the inner character. If a man had the same judgment and were *not* earnest, he would probably be led into even worse errors.

Earnestness in work.

Earnestness in choice of pleasures and amusements.

Earnestness in religious matters, and in worship.

IV.

TENDERNESS.

TENDERNESS shows itself in many different ways. Consideration of others' feelings; never intentionally wound their feelings. We may often think people absurdly sensitive, and think they *ought* not to be so; but whatever we think, we are bound to be tender to their feelings, since they have them. We may try and help them to be less sensitive. Tenderness does not imply *yielding* to everything; we may be perfectly tender, and yet lead people away from their over-sensitiveness, as for instance a child that is frightened. To scold the child will not cure the fright, any more than whipping a shying horse will cure it of shying. Show the child that there is nothing to be afraid of, and you lead him away from his fear. Or if he has done wrong, and fears to confess it,—a little tenderness and firmness will remove his fear, and make him tell the truth by leading him up to it. All this involves sympathy, —the power to put yourself in the place of another, and (as the word means) *suffer with* him.

Tenderness towards weakness. The strongest

should always be the tenderest. Strength without tenderness will degenerate into tyranny. The strength of the strong is given them that they may help out the weakness of the weak. Instances: children at school; tyranny, fagging, etc., the same strength that thus shows itself, tempered with tenderness and sympathy, would be a great power. Tom Brown and East, in "Tom Brown's School Days," by T. Hughes; which of these two was the tenderest, and which the seemingly strongest, and which led the other? *Persuasive* power in tenderness which can "move mountains."

Our chiefest example of weakness which needs tenderness is little children: then old people: forbearance as well as sympathy involved in the tenderness needed towards both. Forbearance without sympathy or tenderness will seem but hard and dry. We must put ourselves in the place of an old person and feel how hard it is to bear to fail and lose his powers of body or mind, and then we shall never think him troublesome or tiresome (if we do we are thinking of ourselves and not of him,—of the trouble *we have to take*, not the trouble he has to bear, nor of how gladly he would do the things himself if he could). So we must not only refrain from grumbling,—though that is a kind of forbearance; we must so put ourselves in the place of the child or the old person that it becomes a pleasure to do the things they need,—to use our strength to help their weakness.

Sick people,—another example of those to whom

tenderness is wanted, almost in the same way as to old people and little children. Examples:—The effect of tenderness in nurses on rough or erring people when ill (see "Sister Dora," by Margaret Lonsdale);—people who have seldom had a kind word:—also the tenderness often shown by very rough rude people,—to little children, or animals.

Tenderness towards animals is another form of tenderness to weakness. Prevention of cruelty to animals, etc. One great test of character is seen in a person's mode of dealing with *trusts*,—either things or persons: with regard to the latter, all that are in any way weaker than ourselves (if we have anything to do with them at all), we are responsible for helping or hindering. So with animals; and all these might claim from us tenderness as their *right*. We have *no right* to be otherwise than tender, and inasmuch as we are otherwise, we fail of what we must one day grow to; or, in other words, we *sin*, if we know that we ought to have this tenderness. How to gain it. *If we know what it is*, we are not without the power to gain it; have it outwardly and in manner as much as we can, and we shall grow to have it inwardly. Try to throw ourselves *into* others, and we can hardly fail to have at least the beginning of it. "The smallest opening left may be enlarged, and heaven will melt the margin as it passes through." (J. Martineau.)

With regard to trusts given to us, see prayer in 9th service of Common Prayer for Christian Wor-

ship. "Make us equal to our high trusts, reverent in the use of freedom, just in the exercise of power, *generous in the protection of weakness.*"

Tenderness towards the lonely or the sorrowful; towards the sinful. It is very healing; tenderness and sympathy is often all we can give to those we most long to help or comfort. But its presence or absence may make a difference to the sufferer which is almost infinite.

Tenderness therefore is shown chiefly towards any sort or kind of weakness or frailty.

It is closely connected with forbearance, sympathy, generosity, protectingness, gentleness, patience.

V.

HONESTY.

Honesty is uprightness in all dealings. Honesty in trade; not overcharge;—give good weight and good measure;—sell good things, well made, and of good materials. All adulterations are dishonest. (Plenty of instances may be found to illustrate this.)

Honesty in our opinions;—not hide them, even when unpopular: it does not follow that we must be always pushing them forward; but we must be ready to stand by them all the more if we think them wrongfully abused and accused. Fear of being laughed at is very apt to make us cowardly if not dishonest about things.

Honesty is owning when we have been wrong: this is not easy: but we always respect a man who can own that he did or thought wrong.

Honesty between ourselves and our consciences. Face difficulties in our opinions, or in our acts; look straight at them, and find out what they are worth, and what is right or wrong, true or false. Not argue and persuade ourselves into what we *wish* to believe or do, but look firmly in the face of

our difficulty, and grapple with it, and not leave it till we see the right of the matter; or if we cannot find the end, then make quite sure that we are not persuading ourselves that what is easiest or pleasantest, or least trouble, is the best. Often sophisticate ourselves. Must be sure that we have honesty of heart,—a real desire for the real best, at whatever expense to ourselves.

Honesty in speech and word: speak the exact truth, and speak it boldly: there is no faltering in true honesty.

If we are in doubt, always choose the side of a question (as to acts) of which we *can* be sure rather than the one as to which we are in doubt as to whether it would be right or wrong: if we have two alternative actions before us, and of one we are sure that it would not be wrong to do it, whilst of the other we are doubtful,—even if we wish the doubtful one much the most, we must choose the other. Much courage is needed to be wholly honest, both in our dealings with others, and also with ourselves. Much truth in the words, "The heart is deceitful above all things,"—because our hearts are so apt to tell us that what we *want* is what is right. Honesty in speech comes to much the same as truthfulness: but it implies perhaps in addition something of a certain openness and readiness which is not necessarily included in truthfulness.

With regard to honesty in forming our opinions, we are very apt, especially if we are changing from one set of ideas to another, to be very much

influenced by our friends: people are often very much *shocked* at a change of belief, and this is often a source of very great pain to both parties. But this must not really influence our choice, with which it can have no real connection: we have in fact "no choice," so called,—if we are honest, we *can* only follow our conscience and our reason where they lead us, and must abide by the consequences. (Examples.)

"Honesty is the best policy." Talk about this very low maxim:—this is not the reason why we must be honest.

Dishonesty is thorough injustice.

Honesty is simple justice.

Honesty is closely connected with truthfulness, conscientiousness, faithfulness.

VI.

GENTLENESS.

GENTLENESS is closely related to tenderness,—but gentleness is perhaps rather more referred to the outer signs and manner than tenderness, which is a deeper quality. A person may be most truly tender, and yet have a rough exterior, and gentleness of manner and ways be almost entirely absent. On the other hand, a person may be to all appearance gentle, and yet have no deep-seated tenderness behind. Gentleness is passive, tenderness is active.

Gentleness may be merely the result of a quiet disposition, it may even be a part of laziness and languor; but then of course this is not the *best* sort of gentleness. Some people seem *born* with gentle ways, whilst others are born with rough ones; the gentle ones may be acquired,—and a rough person often exercises continual self-restraint to reach even the very distant approach to gentleness at which he does arrive. Yet, though the languid sort of gentleness sometimes makes one want to shake a person, there is no doubt that gentle ways *are* a great

advantage, and that gentleness should be cultivated and tried for by every one who has not got it by nature. Thus, gentleness may be closely related to self-restraint:—also to consideration for others. Gentleness is particularly needed with children, and with them especially when they are tempted, or have done wrong: not to frighten them, but to lead them: very much of their after lives may depend on this,—whether they have been *alarmed* into wrong, or into hiding wrong which they have done. It is specially needed also with old people:—patience and forbearance. A rough and impatient manner repels them, hurts them, throws them back upon themselves, acts like unkindness, even when not really springing from unkindness.

It is specially needed also with infirmities. Deafness:—this is as trying to the patience as anything: it is so difficult for those who *can* hear quite to believe in the incapacity for hearing in others: if a person is a *little* deaf, and perhaps also a little inattentive (probably as a result of the deafness), we *shout* when we repeat what we said, even if they could hear a gentle voice quite as well: it is a bit of self-indulgence,—a desire to work off our own impatience, and is very far from gentleness.

Gentleness with sick people. A rough manner will often irritate a sick person to tears. Want of gentleness and tenderness will often leave not only a smart but a *sting* behind, which it is difficult to cure afterwards. Sometimes we think people are "silly," and are rough with them; but gentleness

would be much more effectual; and roughness of this sort is really only indulging ourselves without consideration for others,—indulging our own impatient irritation.

Various examples.

VII.

PATIENCE.

PATIENCE is an attitude of the mind. It exists as a quality in itself, and also with reference to others.

To have patience with others: closely connected with gentleness and tenderness and forbearance. It needs us to be self-forgetful; impatience with those who are weaker than ourselves implies thinking of our own trouble or inconvenience, and not of their weakness. Patience is needed with all sorts of weakness;—slowness (people of smaller capacities, either on account of defects, of youth, of illness, of age, of misfortune),—fretfulness (from illness or natural disposition; incapacity from the same causes),—shortcomings in act (from the same causes, or failure of the *will*).

God's patience with us: wilful disobedience, or want of knowledge, or want of will to resist temptation, or want of will to achieve the right,—or want of striving to *see* the right,—blindness, indolence, it is all the same,—God's patience does not fail; He lets us work out our way: He lets us make mistakes that we may learn, like a wise parent; and yet (if we may say it) how *hard* it must be *not*

to show us when we are blind, and tell us when we are ignorant, what He sees and knows all the time! This is patience indeed. We must follow this example, and try to be patient with others, even if they sin against us to "seventy times seven."

Patience with *ourselves* too: yet not too much: we must not be lazy and self-indulgent, and make excuses for our sins: yet we must not expect to take the whole leap at once and be perfect in a day or an hour. It is a long pilgrimage;—and we must not sit down to lament over our sore feet, but toil on in patience, keeping our eyes fixed on the light before us. And if we should be so unhappy as to see no light, then we must try and remember where the light was, and in what direction it was leading us before it went out; it is sure to beam out again sooner or later:—here too we must have patience. (Faber's Hymns, "Dryness in Prayer.") We must *wait*. This is often hardest of anything to do. Take for example waiting in the watchings of sickness: when some one we love is ill, and all our longings cannot pierce the mystery, or see what will be the issue ("Strength of the Lonely," J. Martineau's "Endeavours after the Christian Life," vol. i. p. 227): then the demand on our patience is awful: yet we have no choice, except to bear it well or ill.

Patience when we ourselves are ill:—or when we are only tired or sad: school our tempers to patience. Patience under disappointment: failure of our plans (little or great) for ourselves, or (much

harder to bear) for others whom we love: failure in our hopes. Sometimes the failure is entire and permanent, because God saw that the thing was not good for us; sometimes it is transient; yet at the time of the failure we need to put out all our patience, as we cannot see anything but that there *is* the failure where we hoped for our desire to be fulfilled. Patience when our desire is postponed, either to a definite time, or indefinitely. Sometimes what we want is put off, and just as its fulfilment seems coming near it is put off again, and so again and again. Patience under misapprehension and misinterpretation, or calumny. Sometimes we are unable to exculpate ourselves, and show the truth, and evil is believed of us: we may not be able to prove ourselves right without injuring others. Patience to wait till the truth comes out. (See "Tarlton," in Edgworth's "Parents' Assistant.") Some people have so borne with patience to bear a bad name falsely, that they have died with it, without being cleared,—they have been strong in the strength of their innocence.

Wicked people can have patience too, and in a bad cause,—but then it is not the patience that is bad, but the cause. (Baldassarre and Tito, in "Romola," by George Eliot.)

We may gradually school ourselves to patience till it becomes not any longer a great effort on each separate occasion, but a permanent attitude of the soul. True patience in the deeper things of life involves *Faith in God:* faith equally true, whether our wishes are fulfilled or disappointed.

VIII.

SELF-DENIAL.

To deny. To deny one's self.

For the sake of others.

Instances:—Parents; the strong for the sake of the weak,—the young for the old, etc., etc.,—older children for younger ones.

Opportunities constantly offer themselves; we are apt to shirk them, from laziness or selfishness; and instead of being glad to seize the opportunities we are anxious to get rid of them, and glad if they slip from us. When we see them, we are bound to take them, and if we do not, we are guilty, and we sin. We must make a "forced march of duty every day." ("Hand and Heart," J. Martineau's "Endeavours after the Christian Life," vol i. p. 245.)

Self-denial in many ways which we ought to think of and do not. Deny ourselves indulgences: drink, tobacco, unnecessary food, dress. The money spent thus is wrongly spent, when others to whom we are bound are in want. So it may also be in books and all sorts of things in themselves excellent to possessors. We must exercise self-denial,

if we cannot properly afford them without stinting others.

Self-denial for its *own* sake; as in asceticism. What is the use of this? It is rather self-centred than unselfish. Look at what is true in its origin; but it should not be pursued as an *end in itself*, nor with a view to its effect on ourselves. "By seeking myself I lost myself, but in seeking Thee only I found both myself and Thee." (Thomas à Kempis, "Imitation of Christ.")

Self-denial should spring from love to others; but if we find we have not enough love to others to make us self-denying, then we should school ourselves to self-denial as an exercise, and merely because we know it to be right; and then the love will grow and gradually make us *wish* to do things for others: "If any man will come after me, let him *deny himself* and take up his cross and follow me." Take up his daily cross. Something to be *borne*. Without this Jesus evidently thought we could not be good or do right. Examples of self-denial in Jesus himself; in the Apostles; missionaries; doctors; nurses; soldiers;—all the privations to be gone through by these. But the little daily unknown self-denials and privations for the sake of others of private individuals, when no one knows, are often much harder to bear than the grander-looking sacrifices of those who are more in public.

IX.

MALICE.

MALICE is the desire to do harm or evil to another.

It springs very often out of revenge for some real or fancied injury. The desire for revenge or retaliation seeks some expression—looks out for an opportunity of "paying off" the one who has injured. When the desire is nursed and not resisted, it will sometimes put aside one opportunity of revenge as not great enough, and wait and watch for a better one; and so it will grow and deepen, and malice is the result—an earnest desire to hurt or injure some one *on purpose*. Hatred of the person thus to be injured is a necessary accompaniment. Instances: —Baldassarre, in George Eliot's "Romola;" two instances in "Italian Boy" (see "Orphans of Malvern"). Springs also out of jealousy. Instances: —Joseph and his brethren; "Michael the Miner." Jealous at not being so well thought of as another, or not having done something that another has. An entirely *selfish* feeling. We ought to be glad that another has done or got what we should have liked ourselves; and the fact that we *should* have

liked it ourselves ought to make us able to sympathize really and truly with another who has got or done what we ourselves should like. Jealousy defeats its own desire. No one ever *could* think the better of one person because he desired to be thought better of at the expense of another, which is what real jealousy does. *Because* we are not thought as well of as some one else, we grow malicious, and wish to injure that person, glad if it is in some way which will *take away* the good opinion of him from other people's minds; but if this cannot be managed, then anyhow do something to make him feel your anger, to make him unhappy, to hurt him in body or mind. Anger thus nursed into malice and revenge becomes far more sinful than a sudden burst of anger, even if that anger is an unprovoked and wicked outburst. Malice exists in small things and in daily life; and we have to be careful not ever to nurse and pet up our anger, if we are to be entirely free from malice. The desire for revenge is malicious. We have no business with revenge at all. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." We have no right ever to punish any one simply because a wrong is done *to ourselves;* and yet this is what revenge does. It is the *personal* injury that is resented. If a child finds that he is punished by some one because that person is personally aggrieved by his fault, he does not respect such a person, nor feel the justice of the punishment. All personal offence or slight

must be put aside before any good punishment can be inflicted, and the offender must be punished without a shade of revenge.

We are all apt to bear malice, at least a *shade* of malice, at times; we do not rid ourselves of the personal feeling; we pity ourselves for the injury done us, and nurse our vexation; and even if we take no active measures to do any hurt to our injurer in return, we are not sorry if some one *else* takes measures to hurt or injure him—we feel a private gleam of at least *half* satisfaction, if he *is* brought to suffer something. Perhaps we have enough charity and desire to forgive to be glad that some one *else* did it, not we, but not enough heartily to wish that *no* evil should befall him. Instances of *small* malice in daily life (school and other). Often do not go beyond one person making another thoroughly unhappy through petty teasing and worries; yet this is malice, though it is in small things. It may even be all negative—by *omitting* kind words or tiny deeds which might be done. But we are often quite as guilty when we *miss* doing things that are right as we are when we *do* things that are wrong.

> "I was angry with my friend;
> I told my wrath, my wrath did end:
> I was angry with my foe;
> I told it not, my wrath did grow," etc.
>
> BLAKE.

I doubt whether we can ever desire revenge without feeling malice. *Never nurse your wrath;* tell it; then fight it; if possible *benefit* your injurer.

X.

PERSEVERANCE.

PERSEVERANCE is persistence in anything:—steadiness of pursuit. It includes a great deal of patience, and a great deal of earnestness, and often courage. Perseverance may be used either for good ends or for bad ones. Instances:—Silas Marner and his money, in George Eliot's "Silas Marner;" Arctic explorers, and others. The struggle with our own faults often seems hopeless; and each time we may seem to fail; and yet in the long run we may gain a *little*, and after years find that we have got a *little* higher. Persevere in something we think right, in spite of being abused or laughed at (Tom Brown and Prayer, in "Tom Brown's School Days;" his courage too). Few things worth having are to be had without perseverance. Learning *anything*—lessons, business or trade; lots of failures; but we learn also by failures; learn what to avoid, and why, and how. We are apt to flag and want to stop and rest; but this is seldom possible without sin. "Be not weary in well doing." Perseverance is a good thing; though it may be used in a bad

cause; it shows a steadiness and tenacity and persistency of character. But if we persevere in *hating* some one—or even only in cherishing wicked feelings towards some one, then it would be better if the perseverance were away. Yet even here it is a *good* trait, turned to a bad use; though a man without the good and useful power of perseverance would *appear* a better man than one who has the perseverance; because his hatred would not *last.* If the perseverance had been shown in perseveringly *benefiting* the one whom he hated, because he knew that hatred was wrong, then the hatred would not itself have persevered;—malice would have died.

God perseveres:—in outward nature: through all failures of special plants, animals, people, etc., etc. Still the same general order perseveres and continues. God perseveres also in *us:* we refuse to listen, or we disobey; we are stubborn or wilful, or careless, but God does not therefore give us up, or cease to speak to our consciences. He leaves us free to listen or to close our ears; but He perseveres, calls us back again and again, and turns our faces again and again the right way;—if only we would persevere in going straight.

We must persevere also in what is the best, what we know and what we believe to be right, even if we do not see the *results.* Often the results of what we do or say are not seen by ourselves. We have nothing to do with *results;* we are much too apt to pin all our hopes on effects, results, the end and

issue of our perseverance. But this is *God's* work, and we have no choice as to the how, when, or where of *results* of our actions. Eager to see and know the end (children digging up their seeds to see if they are sprouting); often defeat the very end we want to see by our impatience and want of perseverance. Our part is to do the best we know, and to *go on doing* it till we know something better, and leave the result to God, even if we *never* see it.

"I have planted, Apollos watered; but God giveth the increase."

XI.

HATRED.

"Envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness."

ENVY and jealousy beget hatred, which is a passion which makes us capable of almost any evil. Small beginnings and seeds of hatred must be checked. *Dislike* may grow into hatred, or it may be checked. I think hatred is a feeling which we ought never to have towards any living being, even a very wicked person: we ought to hate the evil and wickedness, but not the person. People say we cannot separate them, but I think we *can*, for we can always hope, and to a great extent actively *believe*, that even the worst people will learn to be better some day, in another world if not in this: when they *are* better we shall *not* hate them, therefore it is not themselves that we hate, but the evil which they have taken to themselves.

If we encourage ourselves in envy or jealousy, feelings of hatred and malice follow. (Case of servant in "Italian Boy." See "Orphans of Malvern.")

Hatred is often roused by oppression. Slaves in St. Domingo, in "The Hour and the Man," by

Harriet Martineau;—how they hated the whites; —how they murdered them:—how Toussaint kept down the hatred wherever his personal influence reached: because he knew that the hatred was unchristian—though terribly natural: and because it in reality served no good end;—only satisfied private *revenge*. But it was in reality the *oppression* they hated, and saw and felt it embodied in their masters, the whites. As a proof of this—if the blacks had risen and murdered the whites, they would have murdered *all*, those who had oppressed them and their families who were innocent (Euphrosyne too) without discrimination. Madame Ogé. Papalier, etc. History of the *Pearl* and Commodore Goodenough. The islanders' hatred was because of kidnapping, and it was vented on those who were wholly innocent of it,—because they were whites, whom they hated on account of injuries done by whites. Revenge. "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." Is judicial punishment of offenders *revenge*, and why not? Springs from different causes, different motives, and has different ends in view. Revenge is a private and personal affair: even if perpetrated by a large number of people that is only an enlarged personality.

Religious hatred: it is in reality hatred of the *doctrines*, not of the people.

Persecutions: if people would recant and say they believed what their persecutors wished, they would hate them no more.

People *do* seem to hate each other sometimes; yet it is generally for some special reason that they do so, which probably shows that if that reason were away the person would be hated no longer: so that it is seldom if ever unmitigated pure hatred of the *person*.

We are to hate evil with all the power we have. The active feeling of hatred which people have towards evil, and the power which evil has, have made them personify it, and imagine a personal spirit of evil. Yet even here people have found it difficult not to infuse a sort of nobleness into this idea which makes entire hatred impossible. Milton's Satan (see "Paradise Lost.") He was presumptuous and overpoweringly ambitious: this was his evil. In Job Satan is *sent by God* (as servant of God—not His opponent) to "*try* the sons of men." . . . Good is therefore mixed with evil: no being is unmixedly evil;—we may and must hate *evil*, but not persons. But we *do* seem to hate persons, and to wish to injure them; and hatred leads men to murders and horrible sin; these commonly spring from jealousy or sudden anger. Yet if we had time to analyze, probably the hatred is on account of some special act, and is hatred of *that* so overcoming all else as to bring about the death of the person who did the deed.

"Michael the Miner;"—jealousy of Michael's good fortune; avarice, fear of discovery (cowardice), these led to the wicked and cowardly act of hatred.

XII.

CONCEIT.

"A fond opinion of one's self."—*Walker's Dictionary.*

CONCEIT is being very well satisfied with one's self, either for what one *does*, or for what one *is*. It is the sign of a very small and narrow idea of what should be. If we are very well satisfied with what we have done, it shows that we see little or nothing beyond it. If we did as well as we could at the time, and yet saw that, do as well as we might, there still remained something beyond, there would be much more hope of our really growing into something better. But if we are satisfied, we shall have no longings to do better, and therefore shall not try to get further. *Thorough* conceit, therefore, prevents our ever improving; and a partial conceit prevents our improving just inasmuch as we have it. It is therefore a hindrance, as if we were tied by bands which we could not undo except to let us go a little way and then stop.

Conceit is entirely a self-regarding feeling; instead of looking out beyond, to see what there is to learn or to do, we occupy ourselves with looking

at ourselves and our achievements, and admiring ourselves—a very unprofitable thing to do (and, I should think, *very* uninteresting). When others, therefore, do not seem to admire us quite as much as we admire ourselves, when we are not so interesting to them as we hoped to be, our self-love is wounded, and we feel injured, and so we prepare discontent and discomfort (if not misery) for ourselves. We become fretful, from a sense of injury. We have not been thought as well of as we hoped and expected, and we resent it, and are vexed or angry, when in reality the fault lay not in others, but in our inordinate regard for ourselves.

Thus conceit brings about selfishness, which is a worse and deeper evil than conceit.

Conceit is a foolish, empty sort of evil, but it injures the person to whom it belongs more than others, though it is very *disagreeable* to others also; but selfishness is much deeper seated, and spoils the springs of character more, as well as injuring others. But conceit cannot exist without selfishness in some form, for it is a purely self-regarding feeling; and one cannot have this and yet have a desire that others should be benefited rather than one's self, and without this there can be no unselfishness. (Instances of conceit.)

Conceit defeats its own objects; the person who has it wishes to be regarded, to be thought well of; but when others see this, and see that the person is full of himself, it makes them at once care nothing about him, perhaps unwilling even to give him his due.

Conceit shows a great shallowness and absence of earnestness. Could any one who was thoroughly in earnest, and had any deep purpose at heart, ever be conceited? First of all he would have an ideal in his mind, and even though he might partially succeed in reaching it, he would immediately see an endless range more to be achieved, which, till he reached this point, was invisible to him, like climbing a hill where the prospect constantly widens as he ascends. And so his desires would increase *with* and out of all proportion to his achievements, *i.e.* they would spread out before him in a wider and more endless reach, as he climbs only two or three steps with difficulty. Next, his earnest pursuit of his object would not leave him any time for thought of himself; he cannot stop to admire how clever he is, or how much he has done; if ever he turned his face away from his object, he would lose some step which in that moment might have been won. There is *no time* to stop and admire ourselves; if we do, it is equivalent to giving in altogether, and going no further.

Has not God put *all* possibilities before us, and is it not the very height and folly of emptiness ever to think we have *attained* anything to speak of? and if we *had* attained something great, whom should we have to thank for it? Is it in the last resort *ourselves?* Who gave us the power—who breathed into us the breath of life, and kept on breathing in all the aspiration that could enable us to do anything? It is true that we had the

alternative to *do* or *not* to do; but is it not poor and mean to the very last degree to go priding ourselves that we accepted the best possible offer that could be made to us, rather than refused it, and instead of accepting one which at the minute might have better suited our laziness, but which we *knew* to be less good in the long run? (The nigger's boast, "God Almighty made me a little bit of a thing, no bigger than *that*, and I did all the rest myself.")

If we regard (or look at) *ourselves* too much, we shall increase all our faults, as a painter who sees no pictures but his own has no standard by which to compare them—nothing by which to correct them, and so confirms all his errors. This (both for painting and generally) is why young people are so often sent from home, and ought not to be entirely shut up in a narrow circle. A conceited boy or girl is best cured by being sent amongst many companions, where jarring ideas, and wishes, and characters rub off the edges. Where all are equal, and all want much the same, no one can take a larger share than his own.

Conceit is sure to meet with ridicule; it gets wounded and hurt; but one can really very seldom, if ever, be sorry for it to be so. It springs from emptiness and want of purpose, and leads to selfishness, want of consideration for others, etc.

XIII.

PRIDE.

PRIDE is a feeling of exaltation in the mind, which may be aroused by many different causes. It is always a more or less self-regarding feeling. It is not generally a really superior quality to conceit; and inasmuch as it is deeper and less superficial, it is worse when it *is* bad; but the word may be used with qualifications for qualities which are good and respectable, and help to make a good citizen and member of society.

There is *Pride of Possession.*

In a child it is a delight which is allied to gratitude. If a little girl is "proud" of a new doll, and likes all the other little girls she meets in the street to see it and think, "Oh, what a lovely doll! How I wish I had one like it!" it is because she is so delighted to *have* it, and not ungrateful to her mother or friend who gave it to her. In a grown-up person real "*pride*" of possession is seldom connected with gratitude, else we should call it so, and not pride; and I do not think real

pride of possession in an adult can ever be otherwise than bad. But we often say we are "proud" of things, when we only mean a perfectly innocent and proper *delight* in having what we have wished for, a feeling which it would be wrong *not* to have. If a man is proud of his riches, in the sense of liking people to know that he *is* rich, and in a servile way worship his *riches*, rather than in the sense of using them well for the good of those who are *not* so rich, then his pride is despicable, and he does not deserve to have any riches.

One of the possessions people are apt to be proud of is good looks or beauty. This is often closely allied to conceit, and a person who is proud because he or she is handsome is in no way more to be respected than one who is conceited. At the same time there is such a thing as what we call "proper pride" with regard to appearance: a self-respect and consideration for others which prevent a person from appearing untidy or slovenly, or dressed in any outrageous style.

Another "possession" of which people are proud is their children. This is a feeling which seems only very partially dependent on the characters of the children, yet though the *affection* belongs to them however they behave, the *pride* in reality only is theirs inasmuch as they do well and deserve approbation. Yet a mother is often "proud" of her big son, for little besides his strength and size: but it is with a lingering feeling (even when he is selfish and naughty) that the size and strength

are signs and symbols of something behind that is good. Pride of mothers in children, brothers and sisters in each other, and of elder children in "their babies" are all wholesome and good feelings,—and a great help and stimulant through life. A sister's pride in her brother may often keep him from evil, by making him ashamed to do wrong, and unwilling to forfeit her pride in him. So may a mother's pride in her son.

Pride of Birth or Family.—This also may be either a vain and foolish or a good feeling. If a man is proud of his family and descent because they have for generations shown strength of character, strict honour and uprightness, and unflinching truth, then his pride is good, and springs from admiration of their fine qualities: if this pride leads him to do his best to keep up, in his own life, the traditions of his family, and bear down the good name untarnished, then it is good and has a priceless result. But if a man is proud of his birth or family because his ancestors have been wealthy, because they have had the biggest houses or lands, or the best horses, etc., etc.,—then his pride is empty folly and mere vanity. It is then equally to be classed under the following head.

Pride of Position.—But this is also not altogether without its good side: for it may make a man *ashamed* to do a wrong thing, which in a less conspicuous position or one which he cared less to

keep he might have done. One man raised himself by his goodness, industry, uprightness, and perseverance from being a little office boy who swept the office to being one of the greatest merchants in a great town: he was not only *great* in the sense of being rich,—though he was that too,—but he was a truly great-hearted man; he was just and true, and kind to the greatest degree, and generous. Every one respected him, and every one consulted him because his judgment was so good and wise, and because he was always *just*. He had, if any one, a right to be proud of his position: but he was one of the meekest and most retiring of men. He read, and cultivated his mind in his spare hours, and became thoroughly cultivated.—A father to many youths. Another man was clever, and raised himself from being a poor boy to being rich, and became a great mill-owner: but he had no great care for cultivated tastes, he remained always vulgar and commonplace, though he lived in a grand house, splendidly furnished, and his wife and family dressed grandly, and rode in fine carriages. He *was* proud of his position;—but had he much to be proud of?

Some people are so careful of their "position" that they are afraid to be seen to do anything beneath them. A man who has been well off—loses his money; thinks it *beneath* him to go into a small house in a cheap neighbourhood, and live in a smaller way: goes on in one too large for him (or at least for his *means*), gets into debt, no

hope of paying, worse and worse; where is then his *position?* And in what does his *pride* involve others? He is taking from those to whom he owes the money what is their due: *i.e. stealing;* and is that keeping up his *position?* Let him give up all that he cannot fully afford and pay for, and retrench,—and every one whose opinion is worth a straw will honour him, and his position will be worth a thousand times the former one, because he has parted with *false* pride, and is only too proud to be dishonest. (Instances.) Even suppose he does not actually run into debt, he yet stints himself and his family unnecessarily, to keep up the position. If he thought less about it, the position would keep itself up. He should be careful rather of his good character and good name, than of his position, which will take care of itself. This leads to the next head.

Pride of Good Name, which is a *good* pride, if it means of a *deserved* good name, not one earned by seeming to do good work which is really hollow. People take *pride* in their work and doing it thoroughly well, *all through,*—no raw edges neatly cut off *not to show;* no dirty corners, or under the mats,—no ends left not fastened off: no bad materials used and dressed up to look good. (Give instances.) Even here the good *may* be done because we are too proud to bear blame, rather than for real love of good work, and desire to bear a good name. But it is right to be too proud of

a good character to be willing to forfeit it. It is possible also to rely so much on *having* a good name, that for want of proper care and keeping it up we lose it. A workman with a good name for his work,—a shop with a good name, etc., etc., all need constant care and diligence; for the good name will not keep *itself* up, and needs care and fostering, and constant unfailing energy and exertion.

Pride of Temper.—This is the worst pride of any yet. It cannot endure any fault to be found, nor that any one should ever imply that we *could* do wrong. We know very well that we not only can, but do; but even if we know that in this instance we *have* done wrong, we can't bear others to say so or even to *think* so. We are haughty, and indignantly repel the idea, even whilst at the bottom we are conscious that it is true. We are too proud to own our faults, but we should have too much love of right *not* to own them. The minute any fault is found we defend ourselves, even when we are wrong: and this is pride of temper. Often it seems one of the strangest things that we should ever do anything but right: it seems so much the *only* good thing to do,—and so plain and clear when we are looking from a distance: and it seems strange that we should praise a person for doing right. It must be our strong feeling of the strength of the temptation to do wrong that makes us filled with such ad-

miration of a person who does the strictly and straightforwardly right without shrinking. When we are *at a distance* from the fault it seems inconceivable that we should *ever* have been too proud to own when we did wrong. To own that we were wrong is only to admit that we were not too blind to *see* the right,—only too weak to do it: and if we persist that we were *not* wrong, then we show that we were not only blind when we did the wrong, but are *still* blind.

We are often also too proud to *give in*, even when we are convinced, or worsted in argument; we go on arguing or holding to our point when we have been shown to be wrong. Why should it be disagreeable or humiliating to "give in"? Surely because we think more of ourselves than we love truth—the very truth often for which we pretend to have been arguing. All this sort of pride of temper is very subtle, and has to be hunted out of every corner of our minds and hearts.

Spiritual Pride.—The old story of the Pharisee and publican shows this. But most of us have felt the temptation to something of the sort: children, when one of them has been punished, sometimes feel a shade of it. People often say when another has done wrong, "How could he? I could never have done so." How can they be sure? Circumstances, training, character given them by their parents,—we can never judge any one *absolutely;* it is relative, or else not fair. And

yet there is good in the feeling as regards the *sin*,—though there be spiritual pride towards the sinner. Contrast this with "there, but for God's grace, goes . . ." "God's grace" here included *all* that had saved him from being a criminal; *i.e.* his family, education, surroundings, etc.

Some condemn others' religious opinions, and think that they themselves have got the *truth*, and that those who have not must be damned. How can they be sure that others have *not* got it, and that they have?

XIV.

COWARDICE.

"Coward—a wretch whose prodominant passion is fear."—*Walker's Dictionary.*

In a coward fear is the ruling passion. Fear is alarm at what may happen to ourselves, or to others. It is a looking to consequences; an act of calculation: "If I do this, such and such things may happen to me." But what we have to do with are the *springs* of action: if these are right, let come what may; if these are wrong, no regard of consequences can make us right. And if we have done wrong—acted from a wrong *spring* or motive—no cleverness in dodging or escaping consequences can make us right,—which is the only thing we should care for. People are brought up to fear punishment in cases of doing wrong, in order that the wrong may be clearly seen by them to *be* wrong,—that wrong-doing may be broadly and clearly connected with something which is painful or disagreeable; if the punishment serves to connect the idea of *wrong* with the act, and prevents a person doing it again because it is

wrong, then the punishment answers its purpose; but if it simply makes a person a coward, *i.e.* if it makes him *do the wrong no less*, but only try to flee from and avoid the punishment—avoid being found out—then it has failed of its purpose. It is of no use to blind ourselves into thinking we are "good" if we abstain from doing wrong for *fear* of what would happen to us. This is not goodness, but only self-interest; for if the supposed consequence was removed, then we should do the thing, and where would our goodness be?

Supposing a boy bullies and plagues a little brother in his father's presence: his father is angry and beats the boy, and he plagues the little one no more, *not* because it is cowardly and wrong to do so, but lest his father should beat him again, —then he may abstain from wrong, but cannot rightly be called *good*. But suppose that the boy, after bullying his brother, saw that his parents were truly unhappy that he could do such a thing, and that after his father had beaten him for his cruelty, he saw himself that he had been cruel, and that instead of bullying his little brother he might help and teach him and be a friend to him; and suppose that then he abstained from bullying him ever again, because he saw that it was wrong to do it,—then he would be good. In the first case the *fear* was the overpowering feeling; in the last the feeling of right, and reluctance to pain his parents. So every one who is restrained only by *fear* is a coward, in as far as he *is* only so re-

strained. We are all cowards at times, like Peter; a small thing will recall us, like the cock crowing; when we bitterly learn that we have *done* the cowardly thing, which can never be undone. And then we repent, when it is too late to do anything else.

What are some of the terrible things which make cowards of us?

We can't stand being laughed at.

Simple ridicule can make this base thing of us—a *coward!*

And what would be the consequence if we *were* laughed at? We should feel very uncomfortable. Why? because we are convinced that we are *wrong?* No, but because we find that we cannot quite honestly or truly do or say exactly as some other people do. Then what should make us afraid? Not their opinion, but to disobey the still small voice which we can easily shut up in a little cupboard alone, but cannot so easily persuade to come out again. This fear of being laughed at is a constant pressure on some people, which keeps them always afraid,—always shirking what their better conscience approves.

Fear of Public Opinion.—Ballot.

Fear of punishment or displeasure can make cowards of us—even liars (letting others be suspected of what we have done), and not only liars in broad large ways, but liars in little niggling mean ways, which we try to conceal even from

ourselves, *as* lies; but their being smaller and less visible does not make them true; they are the "little foxes" that "spoil the vines." A servant broke the handle off a jug; she was afraid to tell, and she stuck it on with a lump of soap and left it: she would not have told a lie in words, but she *acted* a lie by trying to make the handle look as if it were not broken, and a very silly and short-sighted lie too, as of course it was found out very soon.

Fear of being found out comes under this head.

Fear of physical pain makes us what we are apt to *call* cowards, but in this a great deal depends on constitution. One man who seems very brave may, in reality, be exercising not a hundredth part as much self-control and real courage as a man who is pale and trembling, and apparently giving way before pain. Two men had to go to do a dangerous act, in which courage was needed; one was naturally a brave man, and the other a timid one. As they went, the timid man was pale and silent, and the other (whose courage rose as the danger came near) turned to him and said contemptuously, "Why, I do believe you're afraid!" "Yes," said the timid man, "and if you were half as much afraid as I am you would not go at all."

"Fear not them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do." It is, of course, natural for our *bodily* frame to "fear them that kill the body;" there is a natural shrinking

from pain and killing; it is the nature of the physical life to *wish to live*, and so to dread and hate whatever would take away that life. But these words mean to show how absolutely apart the bodily and spiritual worlds lie,—that nothing done to the body can really touch the soul *unless we let it.* No tortures can "*make*" a man tell a lie unless his spirit yields. Martyrs could not be *made*, by the most awful things that could happen to them, to say what was false. When a man did yield under torture, it was to make the torturers leave off to gain even momentary ease,—but there was then a momentary consent of the spirit or mind, or the yielding could not have come. It is for this that we need to *pray;* we need a strong friend beside us to help us to be strong,—we should perhaps yield if we were alone, but, when a friend is by whose faith and strength is greater and better than ours, we can be brave. So, when the greatest and best Friend is beside us, and we look to Him and He holds our hand, we can bear anything, and almost forget the pain.

Fear of Danger.—Because our bodies are naturally averse to pain, that is no reason for giving way to it. Our minds ought to be so strong and brave as to overcome the bodily fear. If the bodily fear is yielded to and not controlled, it leads people to be very selfish. (Panics in accidents, etc.) Phrase "presence of mind" is very expressive. If "presence of mind" is *absent*, the bodily fears

prevail, and we become mere animals, seeking *self*-preservation before all things. After a shipwreck, some sailors were trying to turn a boat right way upwards to save themselves; the water was swarming with sharks; several men had been eaten by the sharks; and when the boat was righted, it was twice upset again by the men's panic at the sharks. A young lieutenant, named Edward Smith, was one of the men, and his courage and command kept the rest from utter ruin through panic. At last a shark took off one of Smith's legs, as he was hanging on to the side of the boat, but he bore it without uttering a cry, that he might not terrify the men; not till the sharks took his other leg also did a groan escape him. He was dragged into the boat; but it was upset again, and he was drowned. See "Book of Golden Deeds" (Macmillan), p. 405, etc. But "mere animals" often become almost human (in its best sense) by their love and devotion and self-surrender. In a fire a large dog, who was a great companion of the baby, missed the child. The staircase was all in flames, but he rushed up, fetched the baby down by its clothes, and it was saved. The dog lost every hair on its body, and was terribly burnt.

Are these—*Fear of Ridicule,*
Fear of Punishment,
Fear of Danger,

really sufficient to excuse any, even the *weakest* of us, for being a coward? Think of Jesus,—of the martyrs,—of the little "weak" children who

have acted like heroes and heroines. And are we not all conscious that *these* things are what we are made for,—and not cowardice?

It is cowardly when we use our strength unlawfully over those who are weaker. This is what makes us into tyrants. We know what a "tyrant" is in history; but are we quite sure that in the little realm where we reign we are never tyrants? A boy at school dropped hot sealing-wax on the hand of a little boy, to "*make him*" do what he wanted. Fags at school. Do we never do the same things? If we do, in ever so small a way, we are *cowards*. Our strength is given us only to help and protect, never to tyrannize over, those who are weaker. Neither are we to be proud of our strength,—only *glad to have it* to use it, and give it to others. We had it *given* us; we did not *make* it; and even if we have made it stronger by not being faithless in its use, this is nothing to be "proud" of, only to be thankful for to the Great Spirit who has helped us and stood by us, and kept our feet from slipping. The better we grow, the less we shall be pleased with ourselves; and when you feel *very* self-content, you may be sure that you have barely begun to open your eyes to the world you have come to live in.

XV.

COURAGE.

In every way the opposite of cowardice.

Bravery.

Disregard of what may happen to ourselves, before strong love of what is true and right and unselfish.

There is a sort of courage which the boys call "pluck," which is in great part a sort of animal instinct,—it is often very delightful to see,—but it does not follow that it has much *merit* in it. A great many people are plucky by nature; it belongs to their constitution. But weak and timid people often show "pluck" too, and then it is true *courage*, for they have to overcome their shrinking and timidity, and add on bravery after that. Courage in facing danger. Accidents, etc. Courage in facing punishments.

In confessing when we have done wrong, do it at once. Courage ebbs whilst we are thinking about it, and it grows harder to do. "Little Dog Trusty" (Edgworth).

Cowardly to let others suffer for our fault. A

little girl took a copy home from school to draw; when it should have been returned, a boy came into the school, holding the copy in his hand. It was torn and dirty. He explained that he had been using it, as well as his sister, and had carelessly left it out, and the baby had got hold of it and spoiled it. He said, "I was afraid you would think it was Mary's fault, and blame her; but it was no one's fault but mine."

Courage to resist doing wrong. "He made me do it." Story of Michael the miner. When Michael found the new mine, and the men stole the gold and silver ore, and he discovered them, they told him he must join them, or they would kill him. He refused; he was built up in the mine, would have died there if he had not found an unexpected way of escape. He could not be "made" to do a wrong deed, even at the cost of his life. *No one* can "*make*" another do anything, unless he yields his will.

A man tried to make a woman go into the public-house. Many a woman would have said, "He made me go in," but she would not be "made." She said, "No, John, I don't want anything, nor do you; you must come with me." He tried over and over again, but she was firm,—and he *did* go away with her.

Courage to *stick* to the right, in spite of persecution, or ridicule, or failure, or disappointment.

Courage to *endure*. "Endure hardness, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ:" this is what few now

are willing to do. Yet how much is endured and what courage shown by many parents, in daily hardships, for the sake of their children.

Courage to do what is disagreeable or unpopular, if it is right to do it.

Courage to speak the truth, without looking out first to see whether it will do "harm." Consequences are not ours.

Courage to be just. Socrates. Martyrs.

XVI.

PROCRASTINATION.

PROCRASTINATION is always bad. If we put off doing what is disagreeable, it becomes more and more disagreeable by postponement: confessing a fault or a carelessness. Instances:—Children who, if asked on the spur of the moment, would tell the truth, put off sometimes, and the truth becomes so dreadful to them to tell that they tell a lie.

Answering letters; doing business or anything we dislike, doing it at once,—it is *certain* to be true that we shall like it no better by putting it off.

We may put off, and then find that we have lost something by it. Serves us right. But we often put off when it deprives *others:* kind deeds, thoughtfulness, etc. A kind deed may lose all its value and beauty and grace by being put off.

The word procrastination comes from "*cras*" (to-morrow); this itself speaks volumes.

We can hardly estimate the difference there may be to others between our doing a thing *at once* or putting it off.

Selfishness of procrastination. Very often others

do, instead of us, what we have put off doing because we were lazy or disinclined. This *ought* to make us heartily ashamed. We often may put off till it is too late, *e.g.* put off a kindness or a deed of justice till the one to whom we might have done it is dead; then we are startled out of our languor and laziness, and repentance comes, but too late as far as repairing that sin goes. One such warning ought to be enough to cure us of procrastination. A boy ran away to sea, *put off* writing to his mother,—it was *trouble*. He really wanted to tell where he was, but he put off. His mother pined after him, and whilst he was still "going" to write to her she died. Why should we *wait* for a "fatal" warning? Should not the mere thought of the chance of such a thing, beforehand, be enough to forewarn us, and make us try to cure our bad habit?

"Make me holy, but not yet" (St. Augustine). Enjoy carelessness a little longer. But this *must* spring from a sort of feeling that holiness is not *all* that one would desire, and that there is something dreary and unenjoyable about it. Perhaps St. Augustine had a *monkish* version of holiness in his mind only. What "holiness" should really mean.

"A stitch in time saves nine." Who doesn't know the truth of this? It goes directly against procrastination.

Procrastination shows altogether an *unreadiness* of spirit,—laziness,—selfishness. Thinking only

of what one most wants *one's self*, not of others. Our spirits should be always ready, and on the alert, never sleeping. "Good soldiers" of God. What would happen if *soldiers* put off when they received their orders? And we receive orders just as much as they.

See "To-morrow" in Edgworth's "Popular Tales."

XVII.

COMPASSION.

From two Latin words—*suffering with.*

COMPASSION ought to mean entering into the sorrows and troubles of others so much as to share them with them,—take a part in them,—to *suffer with* them. People often think they are compassionate if they see a poor ragged beggar, and say "poor creature" and go on, and go to their comfortable home, and think no more about him; still more do they think, if they give the beggar a penny, that they are truly compassionate. Certainly it is just a little spark of compassion that urges them to do these things; but how little they really put themselves in the poor man's place! They know nothing of all he has gone through and what has brought him to beg; they do not know whether that penny and others he will get, go to get drink, and sink him deeper in poverty, or whether he is really good and honest and anxious to do well. Their compassion does not go beyond what they see: they feel for him a little because he is ragged and dirty,

and they think it must be dreadful to be so; so they give him a penny, and a moment's thought, and then they put him aside and forget him. *True* compassion (or *suffering with* him) would be to seek him out, to find his home, learn why he has none, if he has not, to get him work which he can do, and help him to *earn* (not beg) his living.

Charity Organization Society.

Domestic Missions and Missionaries.

It may be anything but true compassion to give money, or even food or clothes, to get people out of a temporary difficulty; it may only make them worse and less able and willing to help themselves.

Parents with children too. A baby cries, and its mother immediately feeds it: whenever it cries this is the cure, so the poor little thing gets spoilt. It should be fed regularly. So a little child is fretful, perhaps it is unwell; its mother feels tenderly for it and wants to please it, and gives it sweets; very likely it stops crying, but the sweets are bad for it, and when the sweet taste is gone, there is a nasty taste left, and the child cries for more sweets. It is not *true* compassion to give them, for if the mother thoroughly *suffered with* the child she would know what it would *really* want, and teach it, even when so young, to be patient. Grown-up people cannot find sweets and sugar-plums always ready against every trial, and if a mother is wise and truly compassionate, she will feel that even a tiny child must be beginning to learn

to *bear* things, and that she cannot rightly try to drown every desire that cannot be gratified by giving some other thing to distract its attention.

True compassion, therefore, is not to try and remedy a trouble by the very first thing that comes in your way,—*e.g.* a penny to a poor man, sugar to a baby, or a toy to a crying child,—but to find out what remedy would be the *best for the person*, and then give that. This often needs a great deal of trouble, but it is better to hold our hand and give nothing than to do harm; and in every one's life there are cases in which we *can* know, and *can* search out, so as really to help and give true compassion, and these we must not neglect.

True compassion cannot exist without self-forgetfulness and self-abandonment. You cannot truly *feel* the trouble of a friend whilst you are thinking of yourself, and your own trouble, and how much time you are giving up.

Job's friends showed true compassion at first (till they began to reproach him); their sympathy was really sublime at first. "Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; . . . for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him. And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven. So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven

nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great."

They truly *suffered with* Job: felt his troubles so keenly that, for the time, they became their own. And we all know how healing and comforting sympathy is when we are in trouble. Even if we have brought the trouble on ourselves, we do not want to be lectured. A little true compassion—some one to *share* our trouble with us by sympathy—will give us far more power and will and strength and desire to do better, than any quantity of lecturing. When, after the seven days and nights, the compassion of Job's friends had spent itself, and they began to try and find a reason for his troubles, and to show him that he *must* have done wrong or he would not have had troubles (they believed that troubles were direct punishments for sins), they ceased to be a help and comfort to him, and became a worry and torment, and added to his troubles.

We say and believe and feel that God is compassionate; we feel how He grieves with us in our griefs, and over our sins; yet His compassion is too great and too *true* for Him to spare us from the consequences of our sins. He has made the fire to burn, and if we thrust our hands into it, He cannot change the law of burning, and make it *not* burn us,—we must bear the smart, and so learn not again to run into the fire. So when we sin God has made no exception; certain consequences follow the sin as the burn follows putting our hands in

the fire, and our souls must bear the smart that follows the sin, and which alone in reality can heal us. God has so *much* compassion that He can bear to let us suffer that we may be healed. "He wounds to heal." He knows what we can bear, and His love, like the sympathy and love of a dear friend or mother, makes us stronger to bear what else would be too much for us.

In sympathy our strength is doubled; if we are alone we are not half as strong; like bearing a weight, if some one lends us a hand it seems to take away *more* than half the weight. So it is if we can find in God a true friend and rest.

"Can I see another's woe,
And not be in sorrow too?
Can I see another's grief,
And not seek for kind relief?

"Can I see a falling tear,
And not feel my sorrow's share?
Can a father see his child
Weep, nor be with sorrow filled?

"Can a mother sit and hear
An infant groan, an infant fear?
No, no! never can it be!
Never, never can it be!

"And can He, who smiles on all,
Hear the wren with sorrows small;
Hear the small bird's grief and care;
Hear the woes that infants bear;

"And not sit beside the nest,
Pouring pity in their breast?
And not sit the cradle near,
Weeping tear on infant's tear?

"And not sit both night and day,
Wiping all our tears away?
Oh no! it can never be!
Never, never can it be!

"He doth give His joy to all,
He becomes an infant small;
He becomes a man of woe:
He doth feel the sorrow too.

"Think not thou canst sigh a sigh,
And thy Maker is not by;
Think not thou canst weep a tear,
And thy Maker is not near.

"Oh He gives to us His joy,
That our grief He may destroy;
Till our grief is fled and gone,
He doth sit by us and moan."

BLAKE.

XVIII.

PURITY.

We say a thing is pure when it is *unmixed.* Gold is pure when it has no alloy. Purity in character is *unmixed*ness—singleness. A good little child is pure; it has no *mixed* thought or aim, but lives freely and spontaneously towards one object at a time—no side-glances, but concentration of purpose. So we are to be like little children, with single view and single aim.

Of course a man *may* have a "single aim" for something evil—his aim may be purely evil—but then we should not call this by the word *purity* alone, but "pure selfishness," "pure greed," or the like, meaning that it was evil *unmixed with good.*

But supposing that our aims are not on the whole evil, but good, they are apt to be very mixed, not at all pure. We want to learn; but then the trouble stands in the way, and we shirk some of it, because, instead of pursuing our aim singly, we are looking aside at something else which we want to get to: our whole mind is not concentrated on

what we are about. We want to cure a fault: perhaps I am lazy, and I *want* to cure it—*on the whole* I want to cure it—but when the call comes, *now, this minute,* not to be lazy, I get off with doing just as much as I must; if the desire were *pure,* I should openly face it and embrace everything, however troublesome, and do it with the whole of my will. Short of this, the desire is not *pure,* but *mixed*—a desire to cure laziness, mixed with a lingering look at the laziness, a quarter desire not to begin *just now.* So with ill temper, pride, and lots of other faults. So too about sins of at all a serious kind. We think we wish to leave our sins, to cure ourselves of ever doing wrong. Yet, when the question of punishment comes, we want to *escape punishment:* but what we *thought* we wanted to escape was not punishment, but sin. If we escaped sin (*i.e.* were free from it), we *should* escape punishment: but if we *have* sinned, and if our desire for goodness is pure, we shall wish *not* to escape punishment. Plato says that to escape punishment, if we have sinned, is the most terrible calamity that can befall us. A *pure* desire for goodness and purity will clasp the punishment or penalty close, and feel that only thus can it be purified. The prodigal son—"Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in Thy sight; . . . *make me as one of Thy hired servants.*" He *asks* for the punishment. All this with regard rather to the punishment brought to the soul by remorse and penitence, than to outward punishments. As the gold is purified

by fire, and the dross is burnt away, so by the fire of suffering and penitence the inner soul is purified from its sins. "The pure in heart shall see God." If we are *not* pure in heart we shall not be able to see Him. We shall doubt, perhaps, whether there *is* a God; if we do not, with our whole heart and soul and will, desire and seek after good, we shall not see good, *i.e.* God. But if our "faces are set" —if our whole strength and love is given at the very bottom, to good alone, we shall see God. We may fail and slip, we may do wrong, but if the heart is pure, and if, behind all the failings and slips, there is one abiding, constant desire for good, and good alone, then we shall see God. And just in proportion as this is so do we see God; the more we grow in goodness and in purity, the more we see of God and goodness.

One great thing in which we need purity is our love: love for friends, or for lover, or for husband. Love is very apt to bring with it selfishness or jealousy. We want our friend to love us only, or so far the most that no one can compare with us. But though it is natural to wish to be loved, this is selfish, and we should fight against it. It is true that lovers, or husband and wife, ought to love one another so that no one else does compare with them; but then this love should be so rooted and strong that there can be no fear that either ever *could* turn to another with the same love. But pure and unmixed love—unmixed with selfishness —will wish most what is best for the one it loves,

regardless of what happens to itself. Adam Bede resigned in his own mind the girl he loved, because he saw his brother loved her, and he would not stand in his way. Enoch Arden came back after all thought he had long been dead, found his wife married again, saw her happy with husband and children, and went away again without revealing himself, rather than disturb their happiness; died without ever speaking to her again.

If you feel jealousy coming in, in your love, check it instantly, *stamp* upon it and crush it, or it will poison everything. See that your love is pure to the very bottom, that it is open, direct and simple, and that it desires nothing but good, nothing but what is true and honourable. If we let anything creep in which is *not* pure and true, then our love becomes not pure, but mixed, and instead of being the best and most helpful thing that man or woman can feel, it becomes partly harmful.

Purity in every sort of love, of country, of work, of friends and relations, of learning, of nature, etc., not for what we shall *get*, but for the things themselves, because they are good, and lovable, and honourable. Purity of heart will pervade all we do in all directions; make us work from wholly pure motives; and all we do should be done from pure love of God and of good: no side-glances to our advantage or gain; never mind the *result*,—that is God's affair; if we work from a pure heart and desire for purity through all things and in all things, that is all that is our concern, and God will

make the result such as it is to be; we have not to look to that.

Sermon on the Mount contains the sum and substance of purity in every thought, wish, and desire.

XIX.

JEALOUSY.

"Suspicious fear."—*Walker's Dictionary.*

SUSPICION is *suspecting* another of selfish design with regard to ourselves, trying to get something which we want and which both cannot have, of unfair dealings, unkindness, malice, intentional wrong. If we allow ourselves to *begin* to suspect, there is no saying where it will end; it sharpens our eyes to look out for *evil* instead of good. If you begin to suspect, have it out at once, clear up the mystery, and let there *be* none.

> "I was angry with my friend;
> I told my wrath, my wrath did end:
> I was angry with my foe;
> I told it not, my wrath did grow,
> I watered it both day and night," etc.
>
> BLAKE.

Suspicion saps the root of every good feeling, like a canker in the root of a plant, till at last it dies, and makes room only for rank weeds.

Half the griefs of life would be saved, if people had the courage to be *true*, to the very bottom, to each other. When suspicion begins, speak of it;

if there *had* been cause, this openness will probably dispel it; if not, how infinitely better to do away with the suspicion at once, before it poisons all the relationship. *Impossible* for any true union of heart where a shade of suspicion exists. Enid and Geraint (Tennyson's "Idylls"). Othello.

If we "suspect" where we are really *unable* to search out and verify or get rid of our suspicions, then we should do all we can to subdue them, and not let selfishness or desire on our own part magnify them. Remember that in every doubtful case charity *binds* us to give the suspected person the benefit of the doubt. Such a suspicion, *e.g.* as that a person drinks; you have it in your mind, and you try to see its bearing on all that he does, and probably see more than exists. If a person *has* a failing, everything is put down to it, and often great injustice done by attributing to this what has nothing to do with it. A child who has a hot temper is often called "cross," when he is not in the least. A child who had a naughty habit of telling stories or equivocating, when he had told the truth he was not believed (this is also the penalty he has to suffer for his faults—"purifying fires"). But we often wound and give far more pain than we guess by thoughtlessly suspecting others. Often the sin lies all with those who suspect, and the misfortune all with the suspected.

The "fear" which goes with the "suspicion" to make up jealousy is a selfish feeling. Fear that *we shall lose* something we prize. This all goes on

the supposition that there is only a limited supply, and that what is given to another is taken from us. If we were *thoroughly* loving and unselfish, we ought to be willing to lose it ourselves that another may have it. *Glad* we can hardly be expected to be. Even in the one thing above all others in which jealousy comes in most—love—this is *possible*. Adam and Seth Bede (George Eliot). The love of husband and wife should be of such a kind that it is impossible to *feel* jealousy; and we might make it so, if we took care to found it in the very deepest depths. In other love, jealousy should be equally impossible. It is always *pure* evil; the least grain of it is a seed which may produce the most monstrous evils and wickedness. It is the "beam" in our own eye which makes the person who possesses even a grain of it inexcusable for judging another. Most other sins are "motes" to those which jealousy may bring about.

Remember, too, that the love in any one's heart, which they have to give, is never one small packet, fastened up to be given only to one person, or two, or three. It is a seed, and the more it is watered by the presence of good and holy spirits which are offered to its reverence, the more does it grow and spread, and it bears flowers and fresh seeds, and there are little sprouts springing up, one for this person, one for that, little young trees of love for some, middle-aged trees for others, all ages and all stages, and all sprung from the one small seed which was sown in our hearts. If the man to

whom the parent tree belonged cut down or dug up all the seedlings and other trees that had sprung from it, that he might be the only one that had anything, then the world would only be a whole forest the poorer.

Does God take away from our hearts all other loves that we may love Him only? Does not He rather fill our hearts afresh with love every day, and give us fresh ones to love: little children, brothers, sisters, friends? People have tried to do away with all other loves in their hearts, thinking to love God only, but they have only mutilated their nature, and not loved him a whit the more for that—all the less. Indeed, they *cannot* cut out the other loves, and it is only making out that what is natural and right is a sin, to pretend to do so.

God is said to be a "jealous God." Is He so? Think how many people know nothing of Him, and care nothing for Him, and, in their way, love others as they do not *dream* of loving Him. He *waits;* He leaves them to love others, and knows that the *least* love is a holy thing. Is this being jealous? I think it is of the very *essence* of *un*jealousy—of self-forgetting love. All true love, inasmuch as it *is* real true love, is self-forgetting, for it is regard for *another*—yearning admiration and reverence for goodness and beauty as shown in *another*—or yearning desire for their true good.

We, too, must learn to *wait,* as God does. Just inasmuch as we are jealous we do *not* truly love. Jealousy is brought *by* love, just as shadow is

brought by light; if there were no light, there would be no shadow, yet the shadow *is not* the light; if there were no love, there could be no jealousy, yet the jealousy *is not* love. "Jealousy is but the other side of love, the shadow cast by the light, where the darker body intervenes." (F. W. Robertson, "Christian Progress by Oblivion of the Past.") The only one good thing that *can* be said of jealousy is that, where it is, love of *some* kind must be near; any love is good, for it is at least the beginning of rising out of selfishness.

Sarah and Hagar.

The elder son in "The Prodigal Son."

XX.

AMBITION.

1.—"The desire of preferment or honour.
2.—"The desire of anything great or excellent."
Walker's Dictionary.

THE first sense of ambition refers to outward things, and to the esteem in which we are held by others. It is holding up the looking-glass to ourselves to see how we look to others, *i.e.* desiring to be held in honour. The very word preferment means that one thing should be taken before another, —should be esteemed rather than another. We therefore wish to be *preferred*, or placed before others. Though this is, in all cases, a self-regarding feeling, it is not necessarily a wholly bad one, for we may wish for preferment because we wish to be or do what makes us worthy to be preferred, *e.g.* in our work: soldiers (promotion), curates, etc. Ambition, in this sense of preferment, does imply wanting the preferment, not only for any advantages it brings, but because of the honour, *i.e.* the advantage of others' esteem and good opinion. Ambition in this sense leads to a great deal of selfishness; a person who is thus

ambitious pushes himself forward at the expense of others, often neglecting or hurting them by the way. Sometimes done thoughtlessly only, sometimes with intentional slight. Great injustice often brought about by ambition. Prizes and competition: evils of competitive prizes.

Ambition of office—or of honour—may make men really dishonest, both in what they say and in other means they take to gain their object. Macbeth.

Ambition in the second sense, of the desire of anything great or excellent, is good, as, *e.g.* the desire of knowledge: to learn and improve our minds, and thus to *raise* ourselves. People often say, "So-and-so is a *self-made* man," which generally means that he has risen from being poor to being rich; but this is not necessarily a good thing. It is better to have much money than little only on one condition: that you have the knowledge and power and wish to use it well. If, therefore, a man has grown very rich, from being very poor, and yet has not grown out of the small circle of his knowledge and wisdom in proportion, then the riches are an evil and not a good, because he cannot use them well. A man may also be clever and unscrupulous about "improving" his circumstances. But if his ambition leads him to cultivate himself *all round*, whilst he grows richer, then he is *truly* richer, and his ambition has done a good thing for him. If ambition after anything great or excellent is because of its intrinsic greatness or

excellence, not because of what will be thought of us if we achieve it or strive after it (not a self-regarding motive except inasmuch as we wish to *gain* the excellence, or the excellent thing), then it is more properly aspiration: a sighing after, a longing after something which is purely good, when the thing after which we sigh is good. When the life or example of a noble person fires us with ambition to live better and purer lives, then ambition is almost equivalent to aspiration.

In its proper sense, I think ambition always contains a strong reference to self, and to public opinion; and so, though it often helps to an apparent improvement, both of circumstances and character—and often to a *real* one as well—it is not one of the *highest* motives; and if pursued without great self-denial, and without a strong guard kept over it, it may lead to all sorts of selfishness, evil passions, injustice and cruelty.

XXI.

HYPOCRISY.

Dissimulation. Pretending to be what we are not. From regard to what others will think of or about us. From wanting to gain something from them.

Hypocrisy is of all grades, but even the least hypocrisy is an unmixed evil.

What *is* hypocrisy? Is it hypocrisy to force yourself to *appear* in a good temper when you are really out of temper, and to *act as if* you were good-humoured?

Is it hypocrisy to keep your opinion to yourself when some one expresses a different one; when the silence deceives; when the expression would give pain?

Is it hypocrisy if some one attributes to you knowledge, or virtues, or motives which you did not possess (which you see to be better than the ones you *did* possess) and you do not undeceive?

You *may* from that moment determine to do or be such as you are supposed to have done or been.

We show hypocrisy sometimes because we are ashamed of *good* habits or sentiments. People sneer at us, and we give in instead of manfully

standing out for what is right (cowardice). We are influenced by the tone of the company we get into. Religion: prayer a *habit*, and much lies in this. What others *expect* of us, in this as in other things. Going to church, only when the spirit moves us distinctly. *Will* the spirit move us, if we never go, except when we *most* truly *wish* it? The spirit needs fostering, and to have time given to it. There are "*tides* of the inner life;" we cannot be always at full tide; our hearts are too small, and we have not room for that in them. So it is not hypocrisy to go to church or to pray, as a *habit*, even if it cannot be always with the fullest sense and meaning.

Some people go into seclusion, and try to live a life of prayer and religion only; but this is certainly not meant, and probably fails of its object. One would feel most of all a hypocrite then, feeling how impossible it is to live at such heights always.

The great safeguard against hypocrisy in even small things is to be absolutely straightforward and simple.

"Truth to thine own heart thy soul shall save."

"If we desire to grow better than we are, we must, in the first place, be openly *what* we are. We must live our own life of duty faithfully, uprightly, humbly, never trying to conceal our faults, and making no prudery about such poor withered charms as our virtues ever possess. The life of virtue is before all things a life of simplicity." (F. P. Cobbe's "Religious Duty," p. 35.)

XXII.

ENVY.

"Pain felt and malignity conceived at the sight of excellence or happiness. Rivalry, competition, malice."—*Walker's Dictionary.*

To feel pain at the sight of excellence. We are made for excellence and to love and admire excellence when we see it.

"We needs must love the highest when we see it.'
TENNYSON.

If we feel pain at the sight of it, it is not because we do not *know* excellence, and recognize it as such, but because, knowing it, we voluntarily turn our eyes to something which is *not* excellence. If we see a man do a generous and noble deed, and if the sight only makes us feel pain, it must be because we did not, or would not, or could not do the deed ourselves, and therefore we feel reproached by another's having done it; therefore we do recognize the deed as good, but we do not like another man to have done a good deed rather than ourselves. If it gives us pain, we are selfish, thinking of ourselves rather than losing ourselves in admiration of what is noble. If the deed brings us pain, we should

prefer to be without the pain; therefore we should prefer that no one should have done the good deed unless we did it ourselves. Then those who benefited by the good would have had a great loss, and the world would have been the poorer by one noble deed, and fifty times the poorer and the worse by our selfishness.

A noble deed may give us a *good* pain, which no one who feels it would ever wish away except by doing such a deed himself; but this is the furthest possible in spirit from envy, *i.e.* the pain of strong admiration and longing joined with the penitent sense that we are not noble enough to do such a deed ourselves yet, and desire to *grow into the likeness of it.*

"Pain felt at the sight of excellence" is the passive stage of feeling which prompts the next, and active stage, of "malignity conceived." Malignity conceived means an evil design, a wicked thought or desire taking form in a wicked deed of cruelty or injury. To desire to injure a person because he is good and does excellently, and because we do not, is the lowest depth of mean selfishness. Even from the lowest point of view what good could it do? To injure or hurt a man because he is better than we, does not make him as low as we—does not bring *him down.* We are less equal than ever; for whilst *his* deed stands just where it did, *we* have sunk a whole bottomless pit further away from him yet, by adding a wicked deed to our *want* of the excellent deed done by our superior. However many bad

deeds we add up together, they will never to all eternity make a good one—only add bad to bad, and worse to bad.

To conceive malignity against a man for a good deed is to try and punish him for what is good. We feel certain that *God* won't punish him for a good deed, so we try to take it into our own hands and punish him ourselves. Is not this to act the part of the devil, who is supposed to oppose God in everything?

To feel pain at the sight of *happiness*. If *we* are not happy, we can't bear any one else to be happy; it hurts us. There may be times when some fresh grief weighs us down, when the sight of happiness jars and gives pain; but this is not envy; it is the heavy pressure of an immediate grief which absorbs us, and, because we have not hearts large enough for everything at once, we have not room or time to sympathize with happiness; it seems in another world than ours; and *this* pain does not make us for a moment wish that the happiness were taken away from others. To do this would be wicked selfishness. Would it make *us* happy to have the happiness taken from another? It would only make *two* unhappinesses instead of *one*.

To feel malignity at the sight of happiness is to hate a person because he is happy when we are not, and to wish to do him some harm that may *make* him unhappy, not even a passive desire that he might *be* made unhappy, but a desire to help in making him so.

"Rivalry, competition." School-life; prizes, places, may bring malice. Envy of others for being more fortunate than we, for being cleverer or more industrious. When we say "envy," we do not generally mean really envy, *i.e.* desire to possess ourselves by depriving others, or to deprive others, whether we can possess or not. (Which *is* worse?) But we often simply mean that we see the good, and we long to have a *like* good; and if we were given the choice whether *we* should have it or the person who has already got it (supposing it to be impossible for *both* to have it), we should not often really wish to take it away from the other person and enjoy it ourselves.

To detract in small ways from another's praise or credit, instead of sharing; to spoil the pleasure of it; this is envy too, and malice, in more or less degree. Not being able to bear to hear another praised, especially if he belong to their own art, or calling, or profession. They will pardon a man's failures, but cannot forgive his doing a thing better than they can do.

XXIII.

VANITY.

"Petty pride" (*Walker's Dictionary*), *i.e.* pride of a very small and narrow sort.

VANITY is very inferior to pride in all senses, except where pride is of a thoroughly bad kind. Vanity refers *solely* to self; it is a very near relation of conceit. The only reference it makes to any other than one's self is that it looks out beyond self with the one single purpose of seeing how one's self looks from another's point of view. It reflects itself into the mirror of another's mind. It leads to all sorts of extravagances in outward things, much more than conceit, because it belongs more to outward things. Instances (outward appearance). Latin word *vanitas* is translated "emptiness," "unreality," "untruth," "deception," "ostentation," "vain-glory," "vanity." *Emptiness:* it is therefore a want of interests, a want of pursuits, a want of anything to fill or occupy the mind. The mind being empty broods upon the least worthy things. Remedy therefore for vanity is to fill the mind with something worthy of its attention; call it out of

itself into something else. It is not easy to do this with a vain person; for those who are vain have not probably had strong enough affections to draw them out to others, or their affections have been cramped and stunted, and so by the time the vanity appears it is difficult to arouse the sleeping affections sufficiently to call them out to other work.

Unreality. This is worse than emptiness, because whilst that was a negative thing (there was an *absence* of anything to love or to interest), this is a positive one and a *sham.* We wish to appear what others would admire; the wish is not strong or concentrated enough to make us care whether we *are* what others would admire, so that we *appear so* to them, and so that they think we are. Dimly and in a disguised form, therefore, we do not mind if we *cheat,* provided we get the admiration; we do not admit it even to ourselves, but it is so, for all acted unreality is a cheat. To this, then, emptiness leads; there *will* be some of some kind in us, and if there is not active good enough to keep the fortress and fight out the evil, then the evil will come in at the unguarded entrances, and its troops will creep in and fill all the place, and some day will start up, fully armed, and surprise even ourselves,—perhaps ourselves most of all (for we are always letting ourselves off with little deceptions and excuses from the straightforward path). The evil may enter in a very quiet and insidious form, scarcely visible at first, but it will grow. It is like the "little foxes that spoil the vines: which get in

between the palings of the vineyard whilst they are very little, and are not noticed; when they are inside they feed and feed, and grow and grow, and then they cannot get out again because they are too big." * Therefore it follows from *unreality* that we are led into *untruth*, or, as I said, into *sham;* not actively *intended* untruth, but untruth none the less,—untruth *acted* in our lives,—pretending to be other than we really are,—not trying to *be* other, but to *seem* other than we are. This is therefore *deception*, which is the next translation given by the lexicon. Deceiving people into thinking us different from what we are, if they are not quick enough to see through us. Very often the deception is only on our part, *i.e.* we try to deceive others, but they are not deceived, they see through us, though we do not see that they do so; therefore we deceive ourselves into thinking that others are deceived, and we are punished by the deception falling back upon ourselves.

Ostentation is making a show when there is nothing behind: ostentation in various ways. The Pharisee and the publican; the Pharisee is an exact illustration of ostentation, because he made a great show of devoutness, which really did not exist in him; he could thereby only deceive himself and others who had no feeling of what true devoutness was, for any one who had ever felt it would know how it shrinks from the light, and how it cannot even lift its eyes for shame because

* Address of Rev. C. J. Perry, at Portland Sunday School.

its aspirations are high and its achievements so small. In nothing is ostentation so dreadful as in religion, because that is the greatest of realities, and therefore sham is more intolerable there than in any other part of life.

Vain-glory. This is desire of a glory which is "vain," *i.e.* empty, unreal, untrue, deceptive, ostentatious; *i.e.* a glory which has no foundation in reality. What on earth can induce us to desire a credit which does not belong to us? It is the very excess of emptiness and folly. This longing for others' opinion at all costs and without reference to truth, leads us into the most absurd blindness. Blindness first as to what we really are, which of course prevents our ever improving, for we are for ever cheating ourselves as to what we most need, and therefore do not seek it or turn our minds to try for it; and without *hard* trying, and bending all our minds and hearts to it, no good thing in character can be gained. If we discover that any one thinks less well of us than we imagined, and tried to make him think, our vanity is sorely wounded; we do not see that it is our own emptiness that has brought it about.

Vanity brings blindness also in every other way: total blindness as to everything that unselfishness would prompt: it is wrapped up in *self*. It is "puffed up," which "charity" is not. It "vaunteth" itself, which "charity" could not do. It "behaveth itself unseemly," which "charity" also could not do. It "seeketh her own," to which

"charity" is utterly opposed. Vanity, therefore, is altogether bad, despicable, and mean. It can exist in *small* measure, and mixed up with much good, or it can exist in an incurable magnitude,—inordinate vanity. Against vanity, in every little insidious form, we should guard carefully.

"What I am in Thy sight, O God, that I am truly, and nothing more."

Whither indeed would *this* lead us? Far enough away from *vanity!*

XXIV.

ANGER.

"Uneasiness under an injury done."—*Walker's Dictionary.*

THE injury may be either to ourselves or to others. An injury to ourselves is more apt to rouse anger in us than one done to others. But anger is not excusable in this case, except as referring simply to the *wrong done*, and not to its application to ourselves. These are almost impossible to separate. If we are angry at an injury done to another, there is clearly nothing selfish in it; it is then a generous and self-forgetting feeling,—it is a "righteous anger" at a cowardly or mean or wicked act, and implies a feeling of protectiveness of the one who has been injured. Anger at any cowardly or tyrannical deed, or any meanness, or any injustice—indignation—this is right. And if, when the wrong deed applied more to ourselves than any one else, we could feel the anger and indignation in the same way, this would be right too; but when it comes to be *ourselves* that are injured, we are apt to feel so stung by the injury that it seems as if there were some-

thing quite *peculiarly* wrong and wicked in this injury. There is apt to seem a sort of sacredness around one's own particular interests that makes their violation by another rouse us up to stronger resistance than anything else. The more we learn to live in others—to feel with them and live their lives—the less will this be so, and the more shall we feel *their* injuries. This is the only cure for immoderate care for ourselves: so to mix up with others' lives that their interests become as close and dear to us as our own could ever be—indeed, far closer.

We all know that if an insult is thrown at us we feel stung; we feel to *boil,* and anger *rushes* in to us from we know not where. Very often we say something to *sting* in reply,—but who is there that does not know that *it would have been better and higher* to say nothing,—to quell the anger? But suppose an insult offered to a companion, or friend, or sister, or little child,—if he or she is stung and wounded, would it be better and higher for you to stand by meekly and listen? If you answered the insulter by a sudden box on the ear it might be a *real good* deed. We are meant to be our "brother's keeper" in this sense; each of us is responsible for others, and we have no right to swallow quietly indignities or injustice offered to others.

There is, therefore, an anger which is *good.* A boy who fights another for an injury or insult to a younger or weaker child, or to an animal, is not

to be blamed for his anger, for it is a generous feeling that brings it.

But if he had flown into a passion and fought another boy for an insult to himself, then we should blame his anger. Why? Because we have no right *to forego others' rights*, but we are free to give up our own; and we are so incapable of being sure that we are not angry only out of wounded *personal* feeling when it is ourselves concerned, that it is far better and safer to forego our rights. Peter, in indignation at the taking of Jesus, wounded a man; it was for his Master's sake. If it had been for himself, one might have blamed him.

Jesus is a great instance of insults received in silence. Mockery, spitting, falsehoods, and insults; but there is no word of anger in reply. If he had grown angry, and stormed, and upbraided his persecutors, how differently we should think about him.

We are apt to feel angry when we are proved to be in the wrong. Why? Wounded pride cannot bear to *be thought* to have made a mistake. It *is* "to *be thought*" that we mind (a self-regarding feeling); for if there were no one to know, we should not care half as much; therefore our wounded vanity vents itself in anger against the one who has found us out. Small-minded in the extreme.

Anger with children who have done wrong. Should never allow ourselves to be angry when they did what they did not *know* to be wrong. We are often hastily angry with what teases or hinders

us, and the poor child is angrily beaten or pushed about simply out of personal vexation or irritation. This is fatal to a child's moral good. But if a child does a wrong, or mean, or cowardly act, which he *knows* to be so, then indignation on our part is not wrong, but right; and none will know that it is so better than the child himself. People say, "Never strike a child when you are angry;" but I should say never do so when you are *not* angry or indignant; to strike a child in cold blood loses all its meaning, and becomes cruelty. The meaning of a blow all comes from the state of mind in which you are; if you are quite cool and no longer indignant, a blow (which is a natural momentary expression of indignation) becomes a premeditated act of vengeance, a sort of attempt to pay off a debt, not a sudden appeal of roused feeling, to the better mind of the child.

Can we apply "anger" to God? Is He angry? The Jews used to think of Him as angry. Is He indignant and angry when we sin?

When we sin, we offend against the good and the right, and war against them. When we speak of God, we mean the living source and essence of all the good and right. Perhaps if we thought or said that God was *angry*, it would be impossible to separate and keep away all idea of *personal feeling* (a sort of pique, if one may say so), and it is therefore truer to say that He is *grieved*, more unspeakably *grieved* than can enter into our hearts to conceive. And in proportion as we grow more

like Him this will become our feeling too. To a large degree it *is* the impression which we get of Jesus, who was more like Him than any other that we know of has ever grown to be. But Jesus, too, was indignant, though not for Himself. "Scribes and Pharisees—hypocrites."

XXV.

REVENGE.

REVENGE implies retaliation,— paying back an injury received. A barbarous habit.

In early ages, and among uncivilized nations, anger rises at an injury or injustice; the offender must be made to feel what he has done—give him an equivalent. In later times, among the Jews, it was "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth" —payment—and as much as possible payment in kind. It is the keeping of an account book: "A did me an injury on Monday,"—this is on the *received* side; on the *spent* side, "I did A an injury on Tuesday:" on which side is the balance likely to be?

Revenge may be exercised only for injuries done to *us*, or it may be for injuries done to others who are near to us, but this is only an "enlarged selfishness." It is right to punish a man for injuries done to *others*, and to be angry with him, but not out of feelings of *revenge*. Revenge takes no account of the feeling out of which the injury has sprung, and would revenge an injury done by

mistake or accident as much as one done from spite or any evil feeling. This shows that it is a *selfish* feeling, regarding the injury only as it concerns *ourselves* or those near to us, and not looking to its source.

There is a certain sense of justice out of which it springs: when a wrong is done it is so much *absolute wrong;* the wrong must be restored; the thing which has been taken from the sum total of right, and added to that of wrong, must be put back again. The mistake is to think that we can do this by revenge. If one man, in a fit of rage, has killed another, then, if the son of the murdered man kills the murderer out of revenge, does that really restore the balance? He saw that the murder was an absolute wickedness and cruelty; what he felt was that it should never have been done; but if he revenges it by the murder of the murderer, then instead of *no* murder we have two, and the matter is worse than before. (Story of Orestes. The great moral truth in this, as in so many ancient stories.) (Richard's vow in "The Little Duke," by Miss Yonge.)

The mistake is in our having anything to do with revenge. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." We must leave it to God to mete out the exact measure which is to belong to every man. We cannot judge of what others deserve. Where we can guard others from injury by our protection against those who are cruel, or tyrannical, or cowardly, we must do so; and for this we not

only *may* but *must* punish and resist evil in others, but we must not *revenge*,—not try to *pay back* what has been received,—which encourages us in selfishness and self-regard, and shuts out from us all clear sight of the true proportions of the injury. Revenge is a *passion*, whilst justice, which it always pretends to be carrying out, belongs to the judgment, and is calm. We speak of a *just* man as some one pre-eminently cool and calm: "the judicial temper" is particularly quiet and even; a revengeful man is a passionate one, the last you would go to for justice.

In small daily affairs we are very apt to indulge in small revenges. Two bads cannot ever make one good; nor two blacks one white. Our revenge only adds to the mountain of evil.

Jesus discouraged revenge in every form to the utmost. The Jews were very liable to it. Sermon on the mount. Revenge is wholly averse and contrary to the Christian spirit, which makes us long and try to *forgive* injuries, and not to revenge them. If we had more true love in our hearts, we should have no desire for revenge.

This indeed would be a cure for *all* evils, if we could achieve it.

Revenge poisons everything, and "works like madness in the brain," inducing hatred and all unholy feeling.

We are very apt to mask and conceal the beginnings of bad feelings in our own hearts; give them pretty names in place of their true ones; call

desire for revenge, "justice;" anger, "righteous indignation;" jealousy, "affection," etc., etc. We must watch carefully and beware of this.

> "Beware of all, guard every part,
> But most the traitor in thy heart."

XXVI.

LIBERTY.

Liberty is freedom from restraints put by outside agents; absence of necessity imposed from without; freedom to act, to speak, to think.

Liberty in a nation. Liberty on the part of savages and uncivilized people: the liberty of utter lawlessness. Liberty on the part of highly civilized peoples. Difference. In the first case the liberty consists in there being no laws, scarcely even any laws of conscience to control the momentary desires and passions. In the second case the liberty consists in the laws which guide the whole people being the expression of the inner sense of right and justice, to which all bow by one consent.

Liberty in a nation cannot be without common action and common agreement. If each man said that, for his own individual liberty's sake, he must be free to do in all ways just as he liked, then there would be no common and national liberty. There can be no community without individuals agreeing to forego their *individual* rights and interests, where they jar with those of others.

As in the nation the individual foregoes some of

his desires for the sake of the general order, and for the liberty of the whole, so in the individual himself liberty does not consist in following *every* leading of every passion or desire, else these would run counter to each other, and be at war with one another. Liberty in the individual consists in his whole nature being most free and at harmony with itself. "A city divided against itself cannot stand;" civil war. Some parts of our desires and leadings must therefore give way to make room for the harmony of the whole. The divided city can do no good and useful work, only strive within itself, the discordant elements each trying to control and subdue the other. There is therefore no liberty till they unite and agree to work together; if none will give in, they cannot do this. So as long as a man's passions are at war with each other there is no liberty for him. He is not "at liberty," has no time and attention for greater things, but is preoccupied by being torn by strife and dragged hither and thither. He is, in fact, a *slave to his passions*, not tasting liberty at all. When harmony comes amongst his passions and desires, by each keeping a place assigned to it, and not going beyond, then he is truly *free*, because his nature is balanced, one part does not outweigh another, and he is free to work. (For harmony in the "body," see 1 Cor. xii. 12 and following verses.)

In *common* (*i.e.* associated) life, every one cannot be "head." Army—not *all* officers; household—

not *all* masters; trade—not *all* masters; school—not *all* masters, or *head* masters, etc. In work, each man has a *part* of the work to do; division of labour; so all work together, and a *whole* is produced. So servants and subordinates are fully as necessary as *heads;* none can do without the other, or would be *anything* without the other. And so, as each must forego some rights, some desires, some privileges, all should work for the good of the *whole,* and not selfishly try to get always *all* they can for themselves. Strikes; masters and men; trades unions. Servants not doing what is not their *place,* etc., etc.

Some people's only idea of "liberty" is to "do what I choose." Very often this turns them into the veriest *slaves.* A man has a holiday; he means to "take his liberty;" so he goes to the public-house. How about his *wife's* liberty? Has she had her share of it, and "done as she likes," when she with shame and pity leads home her drunken husband after a day's "holiday"? If it is "liberty," it should not be for *one* alone, but for *all.*

"May I not do what I like with my own?" No: nothing is our own to do what we *like* with; everything is ours only to do what is *right* with; if these two coincide, and what is right is what we *like,* then only may we do what we like with our own.

"Our own," as we call it, ceases to be truly our own as soon as we abuse it. *E.g.* we are entrusted with children; they love and trust us; we use them ill, or are tyrannical over them; are they "our

own" then in the same sense as before we abused them? Do they look to us with the same trust and affection as if we had used "our own" as we might have done?

If we consider our health "our own" and do "as we like," and over-eat or over-drink ourselves, we find that it was *not* our own to abuse or misuse, and that it is taken from us, and something else (ill health) substituted. And why? Because there are laws which we did not make and cannot alter. *Following these laws* constitutes liberty, *i.e.* keeps us in health; to follow them our desires have to be servants, and work under the orders of the laws as master; if they disobey, and will not sacrifice themselves for the harmony of the whole, then the loss of liberty follows.

True liberty then is not "doing what we like," but following laws made for us. There is then one law-giver, one parent, one spirit that can take in the *whole* community and fix the place that each must hold, and the work that each must do for the good of all (the individual himself included), and the part also within each individual which *his* parts must take and play.

True liberty is true obedience and self-sacrifice; it is not self-assertion.

We are not truly free, and do not know true liberty, till we cease altogether to strive against the laws made to guide us; till we give in our allegiance to laws which prevent our "doing as we choose;" and till we *choose* only to do what God's

laws command. As long as we rebel we shall know no true liberty. But bow before One whom we know to be higher than we, and give up our wills into harmony with His will, and we shall be the most truly and unspeakably free, and no bondage shall come near us.

Young people, just growing up, are apt to think that if any obedience is asked for they are asked to give up their "liberty." But they must learn that if they cannot or will not *obey*, first of all, there will be no liberty, only fretfulness, chafing, restlessness. In true obedience lies the secret of true liberty.

Religious liberty.

Liberty of conscience.

XXVII.

SELF-INDULGENCE.

THE moment the word is mentioned we all know that self-indulgence is a bad thing, and one to be shunned. Be sure what we mean by it; then see whether we ourselves give way to it, and where and what are our special temptations. It is *indulging* our *self*. What then do we mean by "self"?

Self-sacrifice, self-renunciation, self-restraint, self-denial, self-assertion, selfishness. In all these cases the "self" is a low or bad or poor self.

We have many *selves* in our characters, as G. Herbert says:—

> "Oh, what a thing is man! how farre from power,
> From settled peace and rest!
> He is some twentie sev'rall men at least
> Each sev'rall houre."

In self-respect and self-reliance the word is used in the other sense, meaning a good "self."

The lower self includes our animal and instinctive nature. We have appetites and tendencies implanted in our nature which are not wrong, and yet whose encroachment and growth we know we

ought to resist; it is here that we feel a limit where "self-indulgence" and "self-denial" must meet and fight it out. On one side of the line stands self-indulgence, on the other self-denial. We stand on a point, and can no longer go on yielding to our desires without thought. Henceforth we become something different from mere animals: we choose, and go with either one guide or the other. Now we meet two main questions. 1st. Why, when we reach a certain point, is it impossible to go on living like the animals? why has it come to this, that we must choose self-denial rather than self-indulgence for our guide, or else feel (and be) guilty? 2nd. What is to decide when we reach this point in each case, and is it the same for everybody?

To answer the first question: everything that is put upon the earth has a *use;* it is neither for sustaining or producing life, or for pleasure to the senses, or for pleasure to the mind and soul, or for help to goodness, or for all these and many other things. But everything is capable also of *abuse,* and the real answer to the first question lies in this: that if we follow self-indulgence too far we do not *use* but *abuse* the gifts. This is not the case with the "lower" animals. A lion, all his life long, eats whatever he can get that he likes, whenever he is hungry; and when he is tired he lies down to sleep, and this is not self-indulgence in any bad sense, because the "self" which he indulges is a right and good self. But men do not

do in this way; they have appetites of the same kind, but they have also minds which they use upon their eating; they are not only *hungry* but *dainty*. N.B.—The lesson of Adam and Eve. "Their eyes were opened," *i.e.* they reached the stage at which they had to choose between the two guides. The history of mankind personified. You take one thing because you are hungry, but you take another because the first was so good. (See W. R. Greg's "Enigmas of Life.") Here then self-indulgence steps in. Where the natural appetite ends and daintiness steps in is the dividing point.

It would seem, then, that we are greedy and self-indulgent if we eat more dainty things or more of them than is enough to keep us satisfied and well. (Speak here of the Ascetics.)

But there is another consideration, viz. that we have had *other* things given us besides these natural appetites. Such are the *power* to be dainty, the mind to learn finer cooking, and increase of luxurious ways, better dress, better "comforts,"—more beautiful and refined living in all ways. We *could* live in one skin dress, and in ugly houses without comforts. Are we bound to do so, or to feel that we are guiltily self-indulgent if we do not? No; we are bound to exercise all these powers just as much as to exercise our limbs. In them, too, there is a *use*. It is only when we come to their *abuse* that we go wrong.

So there is a continually ascending scale, and it

is in the *balance* of all powers that right order consists. It was here that the monastic system went wrong, as I think. It sprang out of a noble desire to do away with certain vast evils. But true power over ourselves, true strength, lies not in the entire shutting out of light from one side, in putting out our eye because it *might* deceive, but in *using* the light without abusing it, in teaching our eye to see rightly.

Now we come to the second question, How we are to know when we get to this point, and is it the same for everybody? The answer to the last we see clearly in a moment; for what would be great self-denial to a rich man with a great deal of money to spend, might be a wholly inconceivable stretch of self-indulgence to a small shopkeeper or a very poor man. Money and wealth and resources are *some* amongst the "powers" given. They too must be used, not abused.

Therefore the point where self-indulgence should yield to self-restraint is not the same for any two individuals. So here comes in the *use* of another power—conscience—to decide for us. Wherever we find that we are losing our *balance,* that one thing takes the place which ought to be left for others, that one taste is swamping a better one, or filling the place which belongs by right to a habit, or a thought, or a deed, or that one level of thoughts and feelings is taking the place of a better, we know that the point is reached, and that instead of living in innocence, we are living in self-indulgence;

instead of being free, we are becoming slaves; and the longer we go on the worse slaves we shall become.

Wherever a *better* suggests itself to us to do or think or *say*, we are thereby *bound* to do it, or think it, or say it, and put the other thing away from us. If we do not, we are indulgent of our *lower* "self," in opposition to the higher "self." Temptations every day, to ease, to greediness of money, dress, fame, repute, or credit; to vanity, to show, or to undue retirement from shyness, are countless, and not to be numbered or described. *Only* a clear look out with conscience can keep us right.

When we say a man makes himself "a brute" by self-indulgence, it seems hard on the brutes, who do the things *without* self-indulgence; and of course the man who acts so is far worse than the brute (who is not bad *at all*). But we mean that the man foregoes his special advantages of knowledge and higher endowments, and throws them all away (as when he gets drunk) to make himself equal only to a pig, who knows no limit except his animal desires. But still no man in so doing makes himself *equal* to even the best animal, for he makes himself *far worse*, because he knew better and did worse. The beast knows when he has had enough, and then he stops. The man knows too, and then he goes on!

Easy to see what habitual self-indulgence would lead to. Restless desires, always craving, no healthy restraint, feverish strivings after what we

ought to be content without. (See lesson on Liberty.)

"Oh, what a thing is man! how farre from power,
From settled peace and rest!
He is some twentie sev'rall men at least
Each sev'rall houre.

"One while he counts of heaven, as of his treasure;
But then a thought creeps in,
And calls him coward, who for feare of sinne
Will lose a pleasure.

"Now he will fight it out, and to the warres;
Now eat his bread in peace,
And snudge in quiet; now he scorns increase;
Now all day spares.

"He builds a house, which quickly down must go,
As if a whirlwind blew
And crusht the building; and it's partly true,
His mind is so.

"Oh, what a sight were man, if his attires
Did alter with his mind;
And, like a dolphin's skinne, his clothes combined
With his desires!

"Surely if each one saw another's heart,
There would be no commerce,
No sale or bargain passe; all would disperse,
And live apart.

"Lord, mend or rather make us; one creation
Will not suffice our turn;
Except thou make us dayly, we shall spurn
Our own salvation."

GEORGE HERBERT.

XXVIII.

SELF-CONTROL AND SELF-RESTRAINT.

NOTICE difference between them. Self-control goes the deepest and holds the reins over the inner springs of feeling; self-restraint keeps the curb on the manifestation and expression of them. If we say that we *control* our passion, we imply that we are ashamed of its existence, and try to stifle it and expel it; if we say that we *restrain* our passion, it is less thorough—we keep it in and hold it back, but not so much because we feel it to be in itself base as "for the sake of those that stand by," because we are ashamed to *show* it. Both are good; but self-control is by far the strongest and best. Both may be applied mostly to the same things. Thus we may *restrain* ourselves when we feel temptations to greediness, or we may *control* ourselves. In the first case, when prudence, or conscience, or instinct tells us we have had enough, we restrain ourselves from taking more; but if we *control* ourselves, we are complete masters of ourselves—greediness included, and trample down the

rising greedy desire with the command, "Get thee behind me." So with any temptations—passion, anger, jealousy.

People (especially young people, boys and youths) often seem to think that *freedom and liberty* consist in what they call "doing what you like," and following every impulse that claims them. If a thing is forbidden wholly or in part, and is a little or quite illegal (publicly or privately), they think they show their *freedom* by doing it. But no one will ever be really *free* till he is thoroughly self-controlled. A person's real *self* means the best of him—the enduring part, which underlies all his faults and failings. His *faults* change: now one arises, and now another, and his *deeds* change, and his *thoughts* change, etc., and yet *he* abides and is; and thus "he" is the self—the enduring self. This self must have room to grow. If it is shut up by passions and failings so closely that no light and air can reach it, it will die; and passions and failings, too, grow if they are allowed; and as they are a growth *upon* the underlying self, they reach the light and air first and grow so fast as to shut them out from the true self, and bury it, unless the true underlying self puts forth its power and holds them back, or plucks them up by the roots, and flings them away. This is self-control, and without this no man is free. When he follows his selfish desires or appetites, yielding to the wishes *not* of the inner and real self, but of what has overgrown it, and seems to stand in

place of it, instead of being *free* he is a *slave*. And so many of those who boast of their freedom, and wilfully follow their own will and desires, are the truest slaves. Who is a greater slave than a drunkard, or one who cannot resist the invitations of his appetites? Who is a greater slave than a man in a passion of rage? *He* is not master of himself; his self is the mean slave of his passion, which turns him where it will. But let him *control* himself in either of these cases, and who is more gloriously free? "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

Self-control is one great difference between men and animals. Animals can learn to *restrain* themselves, *i.e.* hold themselves back from doing what they learn to be not approved by those they love. But they have not self-control: the impulse to do the thing they wish for returns; and if the outer restraint of fear or love, or the outer *reminder*, is absent, the self-restraint is taken off, and the deed is done. This shows the difference between the two.

It is sometimes said that self-control is only *courage* under another form. No doubt it implies and includes courage, *e.g.* bearing pain, etc.; but dogs, lions, cats, horses, etc., have *courage* often, but that is not self-control. Courage is much more of an instinct than self-control; courage comes by nature to some; those who have little of it by nature can make up by self-control. But this is

a fearful ordeal. It may need more self-control for one person not to scream when frightened by a cat running out of a dark room, than for another to be calm and self-possessed when he sees the house on fire in which he knows his friends are. No man can be blamed for not having courage; every one must be blamed for not having self-control. For that inner self is meant to be master over all besides.

(As example see Plato's myth of the chariot and the driver with the horses. The horses are Appetite, and Spirit or Courage, and are unequally matched; the driver is Reason.)

When a person is by nature timid, then self-control must step in and do double duty, and put restraint on the fears and anxieties. Results of want of self-control in the parents in a home shown in the children: they are undisciplined and wilful, learning daily to be slaves more and more to their changing wills and desires. To the young child his parents and elders are the representatives of God; but to the older person his own conscience is the representative and messenger of God and of all good in his inner and enduring self. A man's conscience controls him, and we call it then *self*-control; but it is in reality *God* controlling us if we will listen. It is like the chariot: God holds the reins; we are the horses; when we disobey, we take the bit in our teeth and run away, and *will* not obey; when we obey, we do not ourselves find out where to go, or what to do, but yield ourselves

to a guidance which is wiser and better than our own. We exercise self-control in yielding up to a greater and better control. If we refuse to control ourselves, we refuse to accept the control and guidance which is better than our own wills and wishes.

What we have to control is not only our actions and words (that would be only self-restraint), but our feelings and desires. If they are wrong, we must so control them as to *abolish* them if possible, and get the room filled by right ones. Change anger into gentleness, jealousy into generosity, revenge into desire to help and bless, etc. We cannot simply *kill out* one feeling or desire, and put nothing in its place; the place *must* be filled with something; and we are responsible for what we put in.

Self-denial needs great self-restraint, and *vice versâ*. So also of self-denial and self-control.

XXIX.

NOBLENESS.

NOBLENESS is greatness of spirit, greatness of character.

Nobleness includes all good qualities, but is used rather where the heroic qualities preponderate. It is used much of those who sacrifice their private desires or aims for the good of the public, or of others anywhere; of those who run into danger for the good of others, forgetting themselves; of those who can endure pain or persecution without flinching, holding fast to the right without yielding an inch.

A man is noble who sticks to his ship in disaster, and sees all saved before himself, and can endure to go down without a murmur.

A man is noble who leads on into battle, defying danger and supporting others by his example.

A man is noble who endures pain without flinching to save another, as the man who, whilst holding up his companion to solder the cross on to the church steeple, when his companion's life depended on *his* steadiness, bore without even a *start* the dropping of scalding solder on his hands. See

also the story of man and sharks (from "Book of Golden Deeds," p. 405) in lesson on Cowardice.

Nobleness is largely made up of self-forgetfulness; but a certain amount of physical courage is involved in it. None of these could have done any of these things if they had not forgotten themselves.

But though it forms a large part of nobleness, self-forgetfulness forms no *less* a part of a different type of character, which we should call rather saintly than noble. A woman who renounces all her strongest wishes at the will of a father or mother, and lives a sweet and loving life for their sakes, without a murmur, is noble, but is saintly too; so is one who suffers from constant pain or sickness, yet sheds a light on all around; so is one who in silence bears calumny and reproach, and waits till time shall show the truth, and perhaps dies still under the cloud. Martyrs, etc.

Paul was noble. Jesus was saintly. Same types exist in our "common" everyday life. Little boy who jumped into the canal to save another, without thinking about whether he could swim. Little Barbara S. (See Lamb's "Essays of Elia.")

Just in proportion to a person's nobleness of spirit will he in private life throw away his own desires and interests and allow nothing to separate him from others; he will have a large-hearted warmth and charity, and live at one with them. Nobleness involves a certain warmth and fervour of outer manifestation, which may be quite absent from the gentler forms of character.

But we must not think that nobleness can only exist where *great* events come, or *great* calls arise; these are only great test occasions which call upon us to show what spirit we are of; they are only the *outcome* of all that is really forming in us through all the quiet times. If we are not "noble" in secret, in our inner characters, in all the little niggling trials and tests of daily life, there will be no nobleness to come out of us when the great occasions come.

Like the soldier: if he has not gone through all the drill, all the drudgery, when the battle comes, he will not be able to fight as a good soldier.

Like the scholar: he cannot get through his examination, unless he *works* and *learns* before. The examination is not a thing in itself, isolated; it is to test what we have learnt, to show that we have learnt well.

Such are the sudden calls on us for self-forgetfulness, or nobleness, or courage. They are our "examinations." No "cramming" is any use here: we can't "get up" self-forgetfulness, courage, truthfulness, love, open-heartedness, etc., etc., at the last minute, by a week's or a month's work, any more than we can make an acorn become an oak tree in an hour, or a week, or a month. They are slow growths, and must be built up by life-long pains and labour and prayer. Besides, unlike examinations, we never know when these crises are coming; so if otherwise we could prepare for them, this prevents it. Those who *are really great*

will *come out great* when serious calls come; but those whose spirits are poor and small will fail. We may all educate our spirits, and by earnest following after what is great and noble we not only *may* but *must* (if we love it) grow more and more near it and like to it. We grow like what we love. "Whoever loves you is growing like you" (James Martineau). Whomsoever and whatsoever we love we are growing like. See then how great is the importance of having good tastes, good judgments, and good companions when we are young and pliant, and when our characters are forming, that we may grow like what is good and great, by loving it, not what is mean and bad and small.

"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Philippians iv. 8); and not only *think on them*, but love them till we grow like them, and then we shall take up a part of them into our very nature; and they will gradually build us up into truer nobleness.

XXX.

INDIGNATION.

From the Latin word *indignor*, to consider as unbecoming or unseemly, to scorn, disdain, be unwilling to brook, be very angry or displeased with, be enraged, incensed, or highly offended at.

INDIGNATION belongs to something *unworthy* or *unseemly*, etc. When these things come, it is not wrong to feel indignant, *i.e.* when they are done *on purpose;* when an unworthy or unseemly thing is done unknowingly or out of ignorance, we cannot feel indignant.

Instances. Abuse of *power:* when the stronger tyrannizes over the weaker, misuses his superior power to oppress or injure one who is weaker, then indignation is fitting. Boys at school; fights. Petty tyrannies in everyday life, which make us afraid of each other, in which the stronger keep a pressure upon the weaker, and "oblige" them to act against their conscience, or yield all their wishes—wishes which are not only harmless but *good.* Many examples of such things make one anxious lest by selfishness or narrowness *we* should

fall into such ways. How far they could have been helped, how far the character can be helped or changed, or tendencies which seem born with us warded off. Why do these things rouse indignation? because we feel that the weaker or oppressed side needs defending: they are unjustly treated; some of their rights have been disregarded; the proper balance has not been kept. Every one must give up something he wishes, else there could be no society; but if one set of people *always* gave up and the other always had the advantage, this also would be the extinction of "*society*," and we should have a tyranny. The indignation roused, therefore, constitutes us the champions of the weaker. Just as, when two alternatives are before us, and we know one to be better than the other, we are *bound* to choose the better, and guilty if we choose the worse, so the feeling of indignation at wrong is our conscience choosing the better alternative (defence of the weak, instead of oppression), and we are morally bound to do all we can to battle *for* the oppressed and *against* the one who rouses our indignation. If we let it pass by and do nothing, it is disregarding our conscience, and we shall cease to feel indignation at wrong just in proportion to our neglect to follow the call of a just indignation. In great and small things all just the same. Same rules apply to affairs of nations or private individuals. Something which is wrong, done *purposely:* this only can be called "unworthy;" if it is done in ignorance, it is not un-

worthy, though it may be "unseemly." If some one unintentionally tells a secret of yours to another, or unwittingly does you an injury, you have no right to be indignant. But if it is done "out of spite," or with a knowledge that you would object, then you may be indignant. But it is so difficult to rid ourselves of personal pique and hurt feeling that it is easier to see the rights in another's case than our own; and for any purposed injury done to another we may safely be indignant.

Indignation and anger. Indignation is a less personal feeling than anger. It is the rising up of the sense of justice in warfare against injustice. "Am I my brother's keeper?" Yes; in a sense we all are. (Cruelty to animals.) Indignation may be attributed to God or to angels better than anger. Anger is a more private and personal matter. Anger in Cain's case at being looked after and called to account; indignation on the part of God, because Cain had let his anger get the better of him.

XXXI.

COVETOUSNESS.

COVETOUSNESS is an inordinate desire for anything; greediness of gain, or of possessing something.

Covetousness will lead on into various sins: it is a great desire after something, and so we bend our powers to *get* what we want, and then we use unlawful means.

Ahab and Naboth's vineyard (1 Kings xxi.). David and Uriah's wife: what he did with Uriah (2 Samuel xi.). See also, for Nathan's splendid rebuke for the same, 2 Samuel xii. See what misery covetousness brings upon others, how much selfishness is involved. Neither of these once thought of the feelings or desires of the man they were injuring.

It is easy enough to see the wickedness in broad, strong cases; but it is the beginning that must be checked. Pluck out the eye, cut off the hand, etc., before the injury is done. We are all apt to "covet" in small ways, and these are no more right than the larger ones into which they may grow.

We may desire or long for something without "covetousness," which implies that it belongs to some one whose interests we must disregard in gaining it. But to long for what is good and true and beautiful is not in itself to covet; these things we hope sooner or later to reach, to a more or less degree, and without injuring or depriving others.

Covetousness is desire of *unlawful* possession, *i.e.* of possession which cannot be had without some sort of injury to others, either by directly depriving them of something they already have, or by standing in the way of their getting what we ourselves desire and they also desire or need.

A negative form of covetousness is to be *not* generous, to refuse or refrain from giving to others what we know would help them and be right to give, because we want to keep it ourselves, to hoard it, either to use it ourselves at another time, or simply from the desire of possession.

We get out of what we know we should have done by the excuse that no one *asked* us, etc., etc. Perhaps not; but we were not ignorant in our own minds that such a thing *might* be done, nor that it would be *better* if we did it. Therefore we were *bound* to do it; it was a debt; we *owed* it. We are often convicted *afterwards* by a "Thou art the man." Why cannot this come *before* the deed and prevent it? So in all sins.

XXXII.

LAZINESS.

This is a fault of character to be battled with in whatever way it attacks us. With some people it seems to come from physical constitution; others seem so busy and active as not to know what it is. Yet even the most active and vigorous well knows many a temptation to laziness. We cannot so thoroughly see into another as to know all his temptations; and perhaps even those who give the least sign of it have *had* the temptation to overcome, and the absence of the fault *now* shows the completeness of their victory. But there is no denying that, like all other temptations, it comes to some in almost overwhelming strength, and to others it comes in a proportion to the rest of their character which makes it seem insignificantly easy to overcome. This is partly the consequence of the temptation itself not acting really so powerfully on some natures, and partly that the active qualities of diligence and conscientiousness are more awake in some than in others. When a person who is usually active, and the opposite of

lazy, is ill, he often feels overwhelmingly lazy. Then no one would think of blaming him, and saying he *ought to make* himself otherwise. But if a person is *not* ill, and yet is lazy, even if the laziness seems a part of his character, you feel at once that if he does not vigorously fight this enemy at every turn, he is blameworthy. Laziness lies in wait for some of us at every corner; has taken every seat where we meant to sit; has taken the place where we meant to work; stands in our path as we go on our errands; sits on the page where we mean to read or learn; hangs on our arm when we mean to write; sleeps in our brain when we mean to learn;—is a weight, a burden, a hindrance everywhere. And if we yield, you see the result at once. There is nothing for it but one long fight—to turn him out, and leave him no corner to rest in, till he tires of being shoved away and given no place, and leaves us altogether. But if we once give in, he will laugh in our face, and say, "Ah! I have got you now, and you shall be my slave." And a *slave* we shall be if we give in to laziness.

Laziness in *not* doing what we ought to do, or in doing one thing at the time we ought to do another; *e.g.* sitting still and letting others work when we could help; reading a story-book when we ought to be doing work. These cases are very frequent with mothers and children, especially daughters. When we are children, we are so used to leave our mothers to work for us, and do all that

has to be done, that if we do not take care we grow lazy when we are older, and *still* let our mothers do everything, though we are big, and strong, and young, and have our life all before us, and they have worked, and toiled, and are often tired; of some mothers one might truly say *always* tired. As we grow up, and are able, the work which our mothers have done for us when we were small and weak, should gradually fall upon us and *change places; we* should be the workers, and those who have worked so hard should earn a partial rest, or at least have a change of work.

How apt we are to see that something should be done, and to wish that "*some one else*" would do it, and be glad if they do, so as to take from us the need of doing it; and yet if no one else *does* do it, we are often too lazy to do it ourselves, even if we know quite well that we ought to do it, and we leave it undone. And why? Simply because we have yielded up our place to that greedy enemy, and let him push us out of our place. If we were even moderately loving, should we not be eager and *anxious* to do every scrap of a thing that we can for others, instead of shirking and getting off what we see to do?

Laziness, too, in the *way* in which we do our work:—doing it badly, *half* doing it, trying to get off without fully finishing or thoroughly doing it. There are no short cuts; a thing must be done step by step, and each step done well. If your work is done badly and in a slovenly way, it will

have to be done again, or else you will have to leave it thoroughly untidy and bad—a disgrace to yourself, and a trouble and inconvenience to all for whom it is done.

In learning a language you must learn the grammar, and know the rules and forms which the words take, or you make dreadful mistakes and cannot understand the meanings. You cannot jump straight into reading a book in the language; there is no short cut.

Examples. In drawing: cannot at once paint a picture; you get on gradually, each step a *grade* beyond the next (from *gradus*, a step). In Science and Art Department we have examinations in drawing, science, etc., "first grade," "second grade." In sums, in writing, in music. If you shirk the steps because you do not like the drudgery, and are lazy, you will not ever be able to make it up. (Examples.)

Laziness about getting up. This seems a little thing, but may spoil every one's comfort and pleasure. Some people do find it harder than others; but, then, all they have to do is to *fight harder*, not to give in.

All forms of laziness are also forms of selfishness: indulging ourselves at the expense of others.

[Recapitulate, to show this.]

All forms of laziness also involve unconscientiousness. If we were thoroughly conscientious, we could not be lazy, because our conscience would prevent it, making us wage a perpetual war against

it. It is very tiring, and we often get thoroughly weary with fighting. "Be not weary in well doing." Also, "*For* in due time ye shall reap if ye faint not." The *reaping* is then the result of the hard work; if we do not sow, we can never reap; if we do not fight, we cannot win. What we desire to gain is a necessary consequence or natural reward of the toil; and we have therefore a good reason for not "fainting."

Perseverance also is therefore greatly needed against laziness.

"Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not unto men." With all our hearts—"*heartily*." No laziness can go with this; laziness is half-heartedness—quarter-heartedness. "As to the Lord and not unto men" shows how conscience must come in and be our only guide. Never mind what *men* say—they cannot judge for you; for *you only* can know how much your conscience ("the Lord" in your heart) has told you to do, and how much you shirk. A person who seems to *you* to have succeeded most nobly may seem to *himself* to have failed, because of the light given him. (As an instance of this speak of Jesus, who to himself seemed to die a death of darkness and failure, and was in utmost extremity ["My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"], dying the death of a malefactor through hatred and ill-will which he strove to banish for ever from men's hearts. Yet *was* his work and life failure, and did his death only seal that failure by a still deeper eclipse?)

Laziness must be kept out, too, in the control of our passions and the cure of our faults. Let it slip "*just this once.*" "I am too tired (lazy?) to fight against it; another time I will fight and conquer." Shall you? Why not now? And if not now, why then? "Make me holy, but not yet." * Just once more we will enjoy our sins, and then set really to work. Perhaps then *they* will have "set really to work" *on us*—they will have got the upper hand. "Not waiting for the morrow, but yielding TO-DAY." † Here is the great difficulty. *At once—now*, not "*some time*," "*perhaps*," "when we feel more able," etc. We have no choice of time: it is now; this moment will never come again. Where is it going? It has *its* work, and every other moment has *its* work. If we did in every moment of our whole lives *its* work and no other, we should not do more than we ought. (*Ought* means *owe:* we *owe* this; if we do not pay it, we are debtors, and we cannot pay up, for all we have left belongs to *other* moments, and they are full.) We are for ever getting into arrears; we change about and muddle up; we put in things we ought not to do at all, and so crowd out what *ought* to be in those moments, and then we are frightened, and try and squeeze out something else. See what a mess and confusion we make by our laziness, procrastination, and ill regulation. "Life is long enough for the largest good, but too short for the smallest evil." ‡

* St. Augustine. † James Martineau. ‡ Ibid.

When our friends are gone, we shall long to be able to do the least thing, or sacrifice the least thing for them. Why wait till it is too late?

"'Late, late, so late! and dark the night and chill!
Late, late, so late! but we can enter still.'
'Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.'

"'No light had we: for that we do repent;
And learning this, the bridegroom will relent.'
'Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.'

"'No light: so late! and dark and chill the night!
O let us in, that we may find the light!'
'Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.'

"'Have we not heard the bridegroom is so sweet?
O let us in, though late, to kiss his feet!'
'No, no, too late! ye cannot enter now.'" *

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* Tennyson's Guinivere.

XXXIII.

PRETENTIOUSNESS.

PRETENTIOUSNESS means setting up for being something which you consider superior to what you really are.

Society: made up of different classes. There could be no society without different classes any more than there could be a family without different ages: they *work into* one another. The work of society is divided up amongst the different classes: "division of labour" in all senses. Try and imagine society where all were alike: some of the chief good of social life would be wanting. The "many members, and one body" (Rom. xii. 4, etc.; 1 Cor. xii. 12, etc.). Each has his work: outward work; also his place to fill in a more inward sense. Just as his hands do a work which is serviceable to society (in trade or labour, etc.), so in his character he has a very special place to fill and work to do which *no one else* can do. We must never be ashamed of the place we hold; unless we do something which is a disgrace to that place, and would be a disgrace to *any* place, we have nothing to be

ashamed of. Very much false shame of this sort exists. All we have to mind is to do *well* and *heartily* whatever our hand or heart finds to do. Whoever puts his hand to the plough and looks back is not fit for the kingdom of God.

I do not mean that it is wrong to try and move on, to improve yourself, to "better" yourself, even to get into another class in society if you can. All depends on *how* you do it. If you do it by trying to follow others by mere imitation, you will never really *belong* either to your past or your future "class;" you will only be an uncomfortable go-between,—half and half,—rejected and despised by those you try to leave behind, and rejected and despised by those you would fain join. If you are ashamed of the class to which you belonged originally, and try to "better" yourself by showing no loyalty of heart to that class, but only a selfish desire to get out of it and flee away, not minding what becomes of the rest, then you will have no respect from any one of any class, nor can you have any self-respect. The only "classes" which we may honestly and respectably be ashamed to belong to are the *pauper* class,—because then we live on charity, and every independent spirit *ought* to feel galled and pained to do this; and a class *below* the one to which we originally belonged,—because we cannot really belong to such a one, unless we have in some way *earned* our degradation. And by this I do not mean, for instance, that a gentleman or a lady who has met with misfortunes, and has

to work at service, at trade, or any other way, must be ashamed; the only thing he or she must ever be ashamed of would be to be idle when he or she needs to work. If he or she works honestly, he or she will never be other than a gentleman or a lady; and will always be felt to be such and be honoured and respected for their work by all whose opinion is worth a straw. The only people who will *not* respect such a one are the "snobs" of the world; the foolish and the empty: those who care only for the *show*;—and who cares what *they* think? A woman who is *not* a lady dare not for the life of her carry a parcel for fear she should "be thought" *not* a lady (which she is not, and knows she is not); but a woman who *is* a lady, and wants the parcel to go somewhere, carries it without ever thinking about it. If any one thinks whether she is a lady or not, what does it matter? "Thinking" will not alter facts, either way. As some one said, "If any one *knows* you, it does not matter, and if they *do not* know you it matters still less." It is mere folly and snobbishness to be ashamed to be known to do things that it is our clear duty to do. One of our neighbours keeps a servant who does the work of the house; we cannot afford a servant and have to do the work ourselves; but "it would never do" to let our neighbours know that we do the work, so we hide it up, and fondly hope that they imagine that *we* too have a servant. Why should they? If we cannot afford it, would not it be much worse to keep one than *not* to keep one? If our neighbour does not

see this and know it, then he is either stupid or dishonest,—and then why should we care what he "thinks"? And is it any shame to have less money than another man? Classes do not go by money; some of the richest people are amongst the very vulgarest; and some of the poorest people are the most refined and cultivated. The *vulgar* rich people you will never find liked and associated with on equal terms by the people of the class to which they have risen; only if they have risen *altogether*, tastes, capacities, and affections, can they really grow into a higher class; and this they can *never* do by despising their own class,—only by using it and its opportunities, and working with hearty sympathy and goodwill to take up and adopt all that is true and high and good in that class. There is a catch which says—

"If I were a cobbler I'd make it my pride
The best of all cobblers to be;
If I were a tinker no tinker beside
Should mend an old kettle like me.
But whether a tinker or whether a lord,
Whatever my station may be,
Determined to play second fiddle to none,
I'll climb to the top of the tree;
Let who will be second, the first I'm determined to be."

Some one said, "If you go out at night alone, you will be *thought* to be a dressmaker's assistant," etc., etc. And if I am? It is a good, honest thing to be taken for. If I met a friend he would know me, and know what I was; if I met a stranger it would hurt neither him nor me to think that I was

a dressmaker's assistant. So we need never mind being "thought" (by those awful things called "*people*") to be even what we are *not*, so long as we are doing our duty; still less ought we to mind being thought to be what we *are*. If we are poor hard-working people, and have work that needs doing at home or elsewhere, then our shame would be, not to be *found doing it*, but to be found *not doing it*.

If I am a clerk, or a secretary, or a shopwoman, and obliged by my position to be nicely dressed, and look nice and clean; and if I go home and my mother is toiling on Saturday night to clean up the place for Sunday, then if a companion came in, my *shame* would be *not* to be found dressed in common clothes, with blackened hands, cleaning grates or shoes or knives or saucepans or floors or steps, but to be found sitting nicely dressed and letting others toil.

If, on a holiday, a friend or companion comes round, and because I am dirty with doing what I ought I refuse to appear,—*not* because I do not like to be dirty, but because I do not like her to know that I do housework,—then I am a *snob*; I am pretentious; I am ashamed of that which I ought to be ashamed if I did *not* do.

In the same way, if I buy what I cannot rightly afford, because I am ashamed to be less well dressed or well provided than some one else, this is something for which I ought to be scorned and despised, not liked or respected. Nothing makes people greater slaves than fashion and dress.

"Public opinion" is a great bugbear, setting itself up to scare us out of the right path. Fear of being laughed at, *i.e.* cowardice. Pretentiousness is simple cowardice and selfishness. We may smother it up, and give it pretty names; but this is the bald truth. No one whose respect is worth gaining will ever respect us for it; whilst a plain, honest, straightforward person whose conscience is his guide, and a trustier one every day because followed and listened to, will at once insure the confidence and respect of every honest and straightforward and earnest person. *This* is surely what with our best "selves" we truly desire,—not the pretended (or even real) approbation of the silly and vain.

Pretentiousness in learning; show and sham, not real knowledge. Closely allied to deceit, and leads to it.

XXXIV.

TOLERATION.

TOLERATION means *bearing;* but refers rather to *bearing with another* than to bearing pains or troubles of our own.

What sort of things are we to tolerate or bear?

Questions of conduct. If a person with whom we associate does something we think wrong, are we to "tolerate" it?

Not to the extent of pretending to approve. We should show our disapproval, and try to persuade him that it was wrong. If he did it out of ignorance, then tolerate *him,* but not the act. We have no right to tolerate what is *wrong;* but it does not follow that we are to scout, and not tolerate, the person who *does* the wrong.

Here comes in the question of *judging* others. "Judge not;" but this does not mean that we are not to try and sift right from wrong; rather that in the same way as we feel sure, in any difficult case, that no one can *quite* judge or decide for us, because no one can get into our very personality, so we cannot quite judge for another, and therefore

we should not set ourselves up to condemn another. Condemn his *deed* we may, as in itself bad, but not in the same way condemn *him*. If we had ever a certainty that a man did something wicked out of pure and unmixed wickedness, that the wickedness was all his own doing, and that he could have helped it *all*, then we might wholly condemn him; but there can hardly be such a case. Take instances of crimes. There is never one performed without our finding at the bottom of it some lurking feeling that either *was* good or *might* have been good, or sprung from some part of our nature which was meant for good and not evil purposes. Jealousy, from love; revenge, from some dim beginning of justice; dishonesty, from some strong desire of possessing something that it would be good to possess, if we could have it legitimately, or the great desire to get something for some one dearer than self—a man who is striving to get something for wife and children.

Here comes in, too, the question of mercy. We cannot judge any one rightly without mercy. What should we do, if God did not tolerate *us* because of our sins? and, looked at in one way, we have much more cause to tolerate each other than God has to tolerate us. Our sins put us much further away from likeness to Him than to each other.

Sins and *evil*, then, we have no right to tolerate; they must be done away with or cured, which they cannot be, if *tolerated*. We may have to bear with

evils for a time during the process of doing away with them, or we may have to bear with things which we *call* evils, and cannot or may not shun, and which turn out *not* to be evils; but against *known* evil we must always wage war.

We often think we cannot tolerate those who differ from us in taste, or manners, or habits; here, too, judging can hardly be otherwise than unkind. But of course we can choose whom we associate with. There is a way of criticizing and *looking out* for faults in others, which is most hurtful to the character; it is like a poisonous weed, and spreads with the greatest rapidity. The very *beginning* should be guarded against. We think it sharp and clever to find faults in others, and pride ourselves on being discerning. Just like the scribes and Pharisees and the woman whom they brought to Jesus. "Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone." "Hath no man condemned thee?" "No man, Lord." "Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more." Jesus did not tolerate the *sin*—"*sin no more*," but he was gentle with the sinner; and he convicted those who thought themselves all right and sharp to have found her out in sin. (Read Faber's "Harsh Judgments.") In almost every one there is something to get over, in manners, tastes, or habits; it is a question of degree. We can *learn* to tolerate a great deal. In sickness: wilfulness that we *could* not and ought not to bear in a healthy person; irritability, fancies, sorts of unreasonable things we do and can bear

then: this shows how much the difficulty lies in our own feeling. Not that we are bound to bear the same things from a person when he is well that we do when he is ill. When he is well our claims on him return; when he is ill, we forego all these, and double the claims that he has on us.

Toleration in opinion. Here the way is very clear. Every man has an equal right to his own opinion provided he has equal means of forming it. But very often the more ignorant a man is, the more sure he is that he is right in his opinion. It is often said, "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing." In this sense it is: if he is content in it, instead of using it as a tool to gain more.

Persecution for opinion in small ways:—losing office or position. (Jews in Germany, see Heinrich Heine's Life: this was prejudice against *race as well;* the Jew Bill in England.) In great ways:—religious persecution. Persecution could never make *one real* convert; a man might yield from fear, policy, or the like. It was used for the sake of prevention—frightening others. But it is only frightening them into being dishonest.

Of *opinions* there should be complete toleration always. Even where we think people totally wrong we ought to be tolerant. Where they are ignorant of what we know, tell them, but let there be no coercion; and every honest opinion should be respected as a man's rightful property. See what *in*tolerance of others' opinions leads men into. How cruel and relentless the persecutors were, and

how narrow and blind, and how infuriated they got, till their intolerance was often like a sort of madness. Inquisition. We must remember, however, that *some* at least of religious persecutors believed that men were *lost for ever* who believed heresies, and that in order to save their souls from being killed it was *necessary* to change their ideas into likeness to their own, and that they really meant and hoped to do so. But it grew into a merciless hunt of all unorthodox people, and a beating them down, and trampling them out of life. Still, to some degree it was a twisted sense of right and hatred of what they thought evil; and evil, we saw, must never be tolerated.

Toleration, then, is to be extended to no wrong or evil, though it is to be felt for the wrong-doer. It is to extend to matters of manner, taste, feeling, and habit. It is to extend to all matters of opinion, including (above all, because here it is most likely to fail) *religious* opinion. Without toleration we shall miss both justice and mercy, and we shall turn into "Pharisees"—judges of others, critics instead of lovers, grow censorious and contemptuous, conceited and narrow, and shall deserve in our turn, most of all men, to be "judged."

"Do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God." Without tolerance we cannot "do justly," nor "love mercy;" and instead of "walking humbly," we shall be setting up ourselves over others.

Phil. iii. 12, etc.: "Not as though I had already

attained, either were already perfect. . . . Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

XXXV.

FREEDOM.

FREEDOM is absence of coercion by other people, liberty to act or speak or think independently of other men's judgment.

National freedom. Individuals who make up the nation are banded together; they make one personality as a nation: a nation has a *character* like an individual. We call France, Russia, England, etc., "she," not "they,"—each is an *individual.* Freedom in a nation as such, then, does not mean absolute liberty on the part of each individual to follow his own whim, else there would be no nationality or national character. It is rather a foregoing of individual desires for the sake of one great object. Difference between nations that are free and those that are not. Switzerland and Italy under Austria, the Turkish provinces, etc., etc. Freedom is not *lawlessness.* If every man went his own way, and there were no national laws to which all must conform, there would be simple anarchy and unspeakable chaos. The nation would then be in perfect slavery to its indi-

vidual members, and could do nothing *as* a nation, having no unity. Laws are made to enable men all to combine and act together (rules in the army and navy), else nothing could be done. As with a machine, all the men who put it together combine to do it in one way, else it would not work, so in machinery of a nation. Freedom, therefore, consists in following certain laws: therefore it consists in *obedience*. People are very apt to imagine that *obedience* is derogatory, a sort of slavery; but the best obedience is really the best freedom.

In national life. Laws: what comes if you defy the laws—if all men were to defy the laws, and live lawlessly? What follows if men obey them? Strength and union. Government, trade, commerce, agriculture, etc., etc., all need obedience to laws, and union of individuals into *one*. Each foregoes or gives up certain *possible* individual desires, or even *rights*, because they clash with other peoples', and no one member must be favoured or prominent over another. *Only* through obedience, then, does freedom come.

In trade, certain rules must be followed, else all business falls into chaos: *modes* of business are in place of *laws*. There can be no freedom or power to trade except within these rules.

In music, the same: there are rules of sequence without which no real harmony can be produced. Defy the rules, and do just what you "please," and the result does not please or satisfy; and what else is music for?

In painting, if you refuse to follow rules, what sort of pictures would you paint? If you say that a road *shall* seem to grow wider instead of narrower as it recedes, because you do not choose to be bound by laws, your so-called "freedom" from laws lands you in utter nonsense.

In arithmetic, in geometry, in natural philosophy, you have to learn the laws first, and then work *in obedience* to them. If you refuse to obey them, and say that 2 + 2 *shall* make 5, to assert your freedom, or that the three angles of a triangle *shall* make *three* right angles, you tie your own hands and feet, and cannot stir an inch—cannot go forward or back.

In a machine, if you say you *will not* work in obedience to it, and try to make it go differently from its construction, you spoil it or disable yourself.

Physical laws of health. No determination to be *free* can prevent your killing or injuring yourself, if you go against the laws. If you breathe certain gases, you get fever; if you keep your wet clothes on, you catch cold; if you jump into a river when you cannot swim, you are drowned. In all these things *obedience* is absolutely essential.

In morals. There is a moral law of what is right, and what is wrong. We are so made that in obedience to this law there is strength, and power, and freedom. The resistance to this law is frantic struggle and certain decay in the higher and more inward powers of our nature. The rebellious man

and the "wicked" man, who is or tries to be a "law unto himself," is beating himself against the laws which he cannot change; they are the shoes which he fancies are a hindrance, but which are to save him from many a wound and cut, and make him able to climb twenty times as fast; like the machinery which the ignorant always dislike, but which, if *used* and not resisted, proves the greatest help.

The natural objects in all places follow *laws:* plants, clouds, rain, streams, sea, sun, moon, planets, animals, etc. Science (to "know") is *finding out* these laws—reading them off, like a book. Resistance is vain and foolish. If, to be "free," we determine to go against these, we are completely baffled; whereas if we *obey* the laws, there is no end, that we know of, to what we may reach. (Scientific men, and their researches.)

In habits: if we say we will "do what we choose," we probably choose something which leads us into habits which enslave us. Who is so real and true a slave as the drunkard, the glutton, the idler? Are we not all slaves to our bodies, or our habits—even in small degrees? Greediness, laziness (lying too long in bed), idleness, ill temper, sharp answers, calumnies, want of charity, peevishness, and a thousand things which we reproach ourselves for, and do not forsake, because we choose to think it slavery to obey a law, even a "law of love." These things are our *chains*, and drag us down.

To work with a willing obedience to the laws which are the *means* of working, and its limits, is real freedom.

In opinion: here again freedom is not to knock our heads against everything that has been established before, in order to assert our freedom, but only to be bound by no other man's opinion, unless our conscience bears witness that it is true. *Not* lawlessness here either, but again *obedience*, *i.e.* to conscience—to a higher guide. This is shown by a reverent spirit. In no form or place can freedom exist alone, but it is always joined to obedience. True freedom is *true service* to what is highest and best.

What happens when men try to force others out of their freedom into obedience to their notions? They take their own ideas as the standard of those laws which are the ultimate guide to men; and instead of seeing that *their* ideas can only be *their* guide, not another's, they try to squeeze others into their mould, which would be just as false for these men whom they try to squeeze as it would for themselves to adopt the ideas of the others. Each man's standard is different, and his conscience alone can judge for him as to what he must do and be.

What do all these laws, placed at the summit of every path we can climb, lead to? Surely to a law-giver—a living will in which all endure, and which gives to each its meaning, and makes each binding. And as when you read a noble poem or

play, you feel a willing captive to the writer, and in so yielding your admiration gain a deeper and stronger freedom, so as we read these laws, and (as we grow a little in wisdom and knowledge) learn how great and beautiful they are, we yield our willing and loving obedience to the Law-giver who gives the laws,—laws which are the means and ways of our work, the tools, as well as the whole world-library of wonderful knowledge, in which we may read inexhaustibly, and feel that never till we were ready and glad and willing and anxious to *obey* to the uttermost were we really *free*.

XXXVI.

HOSPITALITY.

From *hospitalitas*, from *hospes*, a sojourner.

Duty of receiving strangers with attention and regard. In all ages hospitality has been regarded as a duty, even amongst barbarous nations.

Arabs especially courteous to strangers: receive them into their tents, and treat them like brothers, giving them the best of everything.

Greeks. Hospitality enjoined by their religion. Jupiter was called *the hospitable*, and was supposed to be the guardian of strangers and avenger of all injuries offered them. All this without question asked as to who they were. This came partly, of course, from the difficulty of communication and the rarity of travelling: few travellers or strangers, and when they did come, it must be for very special purposes, and undergoing great difficulties and fatigues; they arrived footsore and tired; and then there were not so many towns or inns, or conveniences of any kind.

Hospitality enjoined in the Bible:—Rom. xii. 13,

"Be given to hospitality." Titus i. 8, "A bishop must be . . . a lover of hospitality." Hebrews xiii. 2, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." 1 Peter iv. 9, "Use hospitality one to another without grudging."

Numberless instances of hospitality and entertaining strangers in Old Testament:—Gen. xviii., xix., xxiv. 31; Exod. ii. 20; Judges xiii. 15; 1 Sam. xx. 22, etc., etc. Washing the feet, anointing the head, etc., etc. All the things which could most make them comfortable.

A party of English in Algiers went one evening to a Moorish house, to see a very curious sight of some dervishes. The ladies were taken into the upper rooms and the gallery overlooking the courtyard, to the Moorish ladies, who seated them on cushions on the floor, and gave them coffee, gave them the best places, and though unable to communicate except by signs, showed the utmost kindness and hospitality.

In the East, people would think it very wrong to turn away a stranger, and would defend him (even if perfectly unknown) from any insults or indignities, even with their lives or whatever they had that was most precious. See Lot's defence of the strangers he had housed from the populace, and his offering them his own daughters rather than the strangers (Gen. xix.). It was a feeling of protection and of responsibility for the whole nation amongst whom the men sojourned. It

would have been a public disgrace and shame, if any harm befell them.

How different is this feeling from the recent state of Greece, with its banditti, who try to seize on travellers and strangers, and plunder them, and demand ransoms beyond what can be paid.

The Eastern and early notion of hospitality declined very much with the spread of civilization and facilities of travelling, and with the spread of trade and traffic. From increased want of accommodation grew up inns, towns, and all sorts of improvements (law of supply and demand). When travellers and sojourners very much increased in number, it would be beyond all possibility to offer the same hospitalities to them all; so the ancient and primitive hospitality became extinct with civilization, or rather with increase of population. It would be impossible to house so many as would come, and would exhaust the means of the residents. Also, as conveniences for the accommodation of strangers multiplied in a country the *duty* of inhabitants towards them changed; it was no longer their duty to take them in, when, by not doing so, they were guilty of no neglect, and involved them in no privations and suffering. So the claim and the duty find their level, and regulate themselves.

Modern hospitality. Varies much in different countries and times. What it is in England *now* concerns us most. According to old Eastern notions, we exercise *none*, as a rule. Parties given,

not in order to see our friends, but because it is expected, and then often so crowded as to be no pleasure to any one. Some people say they "can't" give a dinner party, because they cannot afford to do it in the style of somebody else. Why should they? Why not simply ask your friends in a way you *can* afford, and in which you can see something of them? Conventionality has spoiled hospitality.

It is the same with dress: conventionality has spoiled originality and freedom. Large towns are too crowded for real hospitality now; see *too many* people to care to be very hospitable. It is different in the country, where people are scarcer. Instances of true hospitality (and charity) still. A widow woman who was so poor she could hardly keep her boys in clothing, and so sickly that she could only work at intervals, appeared one day with a tiny baby. "Why, Mrs. E., where did you get the baby?" "Oh, miss, *I couldn't help it!* its mother died in our house, and what could I do but take the poor little thing?"

An English man and woman sent a little French child to a school, and when a visitor inquired about it, she found they had taken the child of a friendless French lodger who had died in their house, and adopted it; and though they had several children of their own, this one was quite as dear to them, and they knew no difference.

This was true "hospitality" and also true charity.

XXXVII.

OBEDIENCE.

Obedience may be yielded to strength alone; but this is not true obedience, but rather compulsion. If a child obeys because he knows that he will be compelled by force if he does not yield of his own accord, this is not obedience, because true obedience needs the consent of the will to go with the act. But in yielding to superior force alone, fear goes with the act, and the feeling that if it were of any *use* to resist, and if there were a chance of success, he would resist.

A child obeys most readily one whom he loves and honours. The obedience of animals, such as horses, dogs, camels, elephants, etc., is not because men are *stronger* than they, but because they instinctively feel that they are *above* them. To teach animals, and bring them to do what you want, you do not terrify them, but lead and persuade them. So with children; they are more easily led than driven. An obstinate child may often be brought to do what he ought, by taking his attention off, and giving a turn to his thoughts, and then leading him

gradually back to do what he ought. If gently used he may be led to love obedience, instead of hating it.

In enforcing obedience it is absolutely essential that we should not be arbitrary, enforcing it for *our own* sakes, or for our pleasure merely, or our credit, or for any other selfish reason: if we are, a child will soon see this, and his obedience then cannot follow from willing conviction. He has not the instinct of obedience which is inseparable from *complete* conviction of its fitness. But if he feels that we desire his obedience either for his good, or (still more) because in requiring it we are only ourselves obeying a higher call of duty,—a higher law and a greater Master,—then he will be ready to obey too. He may only feel this dimly, and without any conscious recognition of it himself; but he *will* feel it,—for children are very quick to read the *springs* of action.

There is nothing more essential than that parents should bring up their children to prompt and ready obedience; and that they should carry this plan out *consistently*, not yielding feebly one day, and another insisting on obedience, which gives the child no steady idea of any right and wrong concerned, but only a feeling that he is required to yield to whims: and then he soon thinks that he too has a right to his whims. There is much self-denial required in not demanding arbitrary obedience; leaving the young free where freedom is right for them, and yet leading them with a firm hand, and letting them feel the guidance not so

much of a stronger will, as of a higher wisdom, a larger nature, and riper experience. Where this is the case, the child does not think of obedience or disobedience, but yields where he ought, and generally without a struggle: there is often no conscious act of obedience at all, because the two wills are in harmony through affection and reverence, and common love of right: the child runs to do the parent's desire at once and without question. It is like rowing a boat,—the two oars must pull together, else there is no way made: it is not a struggle, won by mere superior force.

When we are placed in a position to obey any one, we should try to put ourselves into harmony with him; see what he wishes and what he means, and the reason of it; and then try and fulfil, not his verbal commands only, but his *meaning*. Sometimes the mere fact of being *under* any one sets us in opposition; we do not want or *mean* to obey, and we try to get off and go our own way. But this is mere empty pride and conceit. If looked at truly, obedience is one of the very greatest of virtues: and he who cannot willingly and readily *obey* will never be fit to command. Look at the case of soldiers or sailors. What could be done without obedience,—and obedience of the most prompt and absolute and unquestioning kind? If all went their own way, where would our army or our navy be? All cannot be officers. But no man who has not learnt to obey can ever be fit for an officer.

In a concert or musical performance we see an illustration of the necessity of obedience to a leader: if every member of an orchestra determined to be "free" to go his own way, and not to obey the conductor's signals, it is easy to see what would be the result. A body of people working together have to subordinate their private personality to the general good.

Some girls do not like service because they do not like to have to obey: they think they would rather be "free:" but what employment can be more honourable, more useful, or more valuable than a true and faithful servant?

If a lad is in the employ of a master who tells him to do what the lad knows to be wrong, is he to do it, or to obey his conscience? Certainly the latter. If he loses his place by it, that cannot be helped. His *first* obedience is due to God and his conscience.

Obedience is also shown in suffering. It is not wrong to wish the suffering away, if we are ready to bear it gladly if it may not pass from us. We may pray for the "cup to pass," but if it may not pass we must be ready to drink it to the dregs. Obedience of this kind is seen illustrated in the martyrs.

For illustration of *obedience to death*, see the story told of the sentinel in Pompeii, found at his post when the ruins were excavated. Also of "Casabianca, the Faithful Son," by Mrs. Hemans.

If we were perfect, we should choose what God

chooses; and if we wish to be good we must harmonize our will to His so much that we feel no struggle or temptation to be anything but obedient, and joyfully to do His whole will as our own.

Thus it will be seen that obedience, instead of being merely required of us in childhood, must go with us all our lives, and may be one of the highest acts that we are capable of; and that it may be one of the last graces and virtues of a truly noble and holy character, when it rises into completest harmony with God's will.

Young boys and girls are apt to think that a temper of obedience is a want of spirit, and that, as they want to be *free*, they must shake off obedience as something slavish. But true obedience is the completest freedom, and freedom without obedience is only slavery. Take, for example, a young lad who wants to be "free" from control. He shakes off his father's control, and ceases to mind his advice: he goes with companions as young and uncontrolled as himself, and heeds no warnings against them: he gets into scrapes or troubles or mischief; perhaps he drinks or gambles. Where is his freedom then? *Is* he free? Is he not a slave to his companions, to his habits, to his fancies; blown here or there by every wind of temptation? He thinks it childish to obey any authority or laws: he chafes against rules. But what humblest child at school, obedient to his master, his parents, his conscience, and even to the despised "rules," is not enjoying a glorious freedom compared to that

lad's? Through obedience an *order* is put into his life which sets the spirit free and leaves it unburdened by the weight of "unchartered freedom" and "chance desires."

What would be the freedom of a State without laws? And each man is a State in small, and can no more do without laws to regulate the unruly members than a State can. Without laws and obedience there would be only endless strife and civil war, anarchy and uttermost confusion.

If a man disobeys the laws of nature in order to assert his freedom, does he not suffer for his folly? *Is* he the freer for such disobedience? Do not these very laws immediately assert their supremacy and show him how utterly vain it is to try and go against them? Is he not then a slave, bound hand and foot by illness or disease? In epidemics, how often people have been content to call them "visitations from God;" and so they are indeed,—visitations which follow, in the natural course of God's laws, on dirt, bad lives, close air, etc. But are we to keep the dirt, the bad air and shut windows, and live on just the same, and be *satisfied* with calling them "visitations from God?" As surely as we do not obey the good and healthy laws will these "visitations" follow. In the same way, if a man carries a light to look for an escape of gas, does he not suffer for his disobedience to the ordinary laws of prudence and good sense? Or if a miner persists in taking the wire shade off his safety lamp, that he may see better, is he not often and often taught an

awful lesson by what follows,—a lesson too which often affects numbers of homes besides his own?

One who scoffs at obedience as fit only for children shows therefore that he has yet to learn some of the most elementary lessons that life can teach. True obedience to laws, *i.e.* working in harmony with them, as we work in harmony with our parents, or with God, is true freedom; and *not till* we work in harmony with them do we fully use them and benefit by them; whilst we are in opposition to them we cannot use them to the full. So also *not till* we lose all opposition to and work in full harmony with those to whom we stand in the relations of command and obedience do we make full or true use of all that the relation contains. Employers and workmen, teachers and scholars, parents and children, masters and servants,—in all these the part of one is command, direction, authority, protection, and of the other obedience, following, looking up. Both are equally good and equally honourable, if lived out in an equally loyal and honest spirit. No master could do without his servants or workmen; no servants or workmen without their master. "We have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office" (Rom. xii. 4). "If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? . . . And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. . . . There should

be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. . . . Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers?" (1 Cor. xii.)

He, therefore, who has the most truly "free" spirit will give the heartiest and readiest and most complete obedience. To yield complete obedience to what is above us is one of the last and greatest graces of a noble and Christian heart.

(See also lesson on Freedom, p. 140.)

XXXVIII.

REPENTANCE.

REPENTANCE is not a mere change of feeling, but a change of life. A mere feeling of sorrow for some act done is not repentance. A child may say he is sorry, and really feel so at the time, if he yields to laziness and comes down late to breakfast; but if he does not do better in future it is not repentance. We may be sorry when we see the *consequences* of our sins, without sincerely repenting of the sins themselves. If a sin committed makes us lose favour, we may be vexed and sorry without seriously wishing to undo what we have done. The *consequences* of the sin often, however, bring us to see the sin *as* a sin, and make us truly repent. Sometimes people sin without any immediate punishment following, that we can see. Often we try to do things without being found out; we try to escape the punishment. When we do this we have let our consciences go to sleep: we care only for ourselves,—to escape what we do not like: we do not then care about the sin at all, except in as far as it brings us un-

welcome or painful consequences. The true office of punishment is to make people see their sins truly, as they are. God's punishments are in proportion to the sins committed; but men's punishments are often influenced by anger and other personal feelings, which should have no place in the award of punishment. These punishments are then felt to be unjust, and they miss their effect. The effect of *true* punishment is to bring *true* repentance: the immediate response of the heart rises in answer to the punishment which is at once recognized as just and needful to the health of the soul.

If we could believe that the true punishment for our sins was to be suffered by us in a future world, and that the true reward of our virtue was likewise only then to be known and enjoyed,—would this fear of punishment or this hope of reward in *that* life be enough to keep us from sinning in *this?* Surely not: because the temptations of all sorts that press around us are *here* and *present;* they press in upon our senses as well as our spirits; they are tangible realities in our everyday life,—seeming to offer to us brilliant prizes,—tastes of happiness, success, pleasure, wealth,—all sorts of benefits; and the prospect of reward or punishment in another life is comparatively dim, and depends on the vividness of our imagination: we may *believe in it,* but we do not *realize it* and take it home to us as we do the things amongst which we spend our present days

and hours. We *risk the future* for the sake of enjoying the present: we have a lurking hope that even if we sin now it may somehow come right before then. But we have no need to think of our punishments as postponed to a future world. Many of them, at least, come to us in this world: though it may well be that the greatest of them all,—the full vision of how much our wilful sins have brought a film over our souls to shut us out from God,—may not come upon us till the earthly veil falls from our souls, and our eyes are opened to a fuller sight and knowledge than we can now attain to.

What is the most natural thing to do when we have sinned against some one and repent of it? To try in some way to make it up to him. It is not necessary that the desire to atone should take the form of verbal apology or expression of sorrow: we try to do something for him, or show by our manner, and our willingness to do differently, that we mean to do better now. Apologies *in words* are always extremely hard to make, and are probably generally better avoided: in cases of explosions of temper and minor sins which occur in every home, apologies expected are apt to hinder or stint the repentance which is ready to flow freely, if it might only flow forth in deeds, not words. The difficulty of spoken apology no doubt arises partly from pride,—and certainly till the humiliation is complete the repentance cannot be complete; but there is also a certain reserve natural to most men, which

must not be altogether put down to pride,—and a reluctance to spoil with inadequate words (which are all that fall to the lot of most men) the contrition which is too deeply felt to be adequately expressed. There is also the feeling that the greater part of the sin and the sorrow lie between the soul and God, rather than between man and man. Again, if the person against whom we have sinned were as perfect as God, we could have no hesitation or difficulty in pouring out our contrition: but with our brother man there is always the anxiety as to how our confession will be received. As we can feel none of this, but only uttermost confidence, in confessing to God, there is no hesitation in yielding ourselves utterly to Him in penitence. When we are truly repentant we can feel no *fear*, only shame and sorrow and humiliation, as we draw near again to Him, and know that, though we feel this pain, it is the pain of a purifying fire.

The desire, then, to make up to a person for offences committed against him, is shown by striving to do better afterwards: this is real repentance, and not only shallow sorrow for consequences: and though it may meet with rebuffs, it will not be repulsed or baffled; it lays the blame where it ought to be laid, on ourselves, and tacitly confesses the previous wrong-doing. When we know we have done wrong, and are truly penitent, we are ready to bear any sufferings which it brings, and to bear them willingly. If we know that we have

done a deed which has deserved and earned twenty stripes, it would not make us happy or satisfied if we were told that we should be let off with eighteen: if we are truly penitent we should say, "No, no; give me the twenty stripes that are my due, else there will be still a burden left on my soul and I cannot come near to God. If I have done what deserved the twenty stripes *not one less* can I bear to receive. As we know that God has appointed and sends the punishments which we need, and that He knows and sees where we are blind, we are not only willing but anxious to bear such as He sends, and to drink the cup to the dregs, if only we may hope to begin afresh and learn to walk aright.

If a man fails in business, and ruins numbers of creditors, is it enough for him to tell them that he is very sorry? If he repents his carelessness or rashness or whatever it was that caused his failure, —repents having done so much harm to so many, —what will he do? He will never rest till he has paid every farthing that he can possibly earn. He is morally bound to pay every farthing that he owes, though the law may only require him to pay a shilling in the pound.

The prodigal son is a good instance of real repentance brought on by the punishment of suffering which naturally followed the sins he had committed. It could not have been easy to his *pride* to go back and confess all. His pride had to be overcome: his humiliation was complete. Sin is opposition to God: repentance is seeking Him

again, as the prodigal son sought *his* father,—and with the same results.

When we are told that Jesus is to be our guide for what we do, this refers not so much to what he in words desires or forbids us to do, as to the *spirit* in which he lived. Just as a dear friend leads us to grow like him and act in his spirit, so if we admire and love the spirit of the life of Jesus, he will lead us to live a life in accordance with that spirit. Perhaps we need no rule more constantly than to do to others as we would have them do to us. A great deal of unkindness in deeds comes simply from a want of lively sympathy, and putting ourselves in the place of another. If we allow ourselves to be careless, and cold, and selfish, the habit of not feeling for others grows upon us very fast. What some people would repent of as a real negligence towards others, or a real sin, others would throw aside without a second thought, or think lightly of: some would be quite satisfied with pleading a similar act of some one else's, as an excuse or example. The cause of this difference is the different amount of activity in the conscience; and this activity or deadness depends on the work and use which we give to our consciences. If they are not kept in exercise they sink into sleep and torpor. It is not easy, therefore, to plead any excuse for a cold heart or want of sympathy.

It is the same with deeds of "charity." Some who do hardly anything for others think they do a great deal, whilst some who do a great deal

already are always ready to do more and more, because they have a real love in them for God, for those they help, and even for the work itself. These people have truly a share of the spirit of Jesus: and they share that spirit by neglecting no call of conscience, however small;—by which faithfulness the conscience is kept awake and the heart open to every appeal. To those who are not so faithful the punishment comes in the form of the gradual deadening of heart and conscience. Will not the repentance for all such lapsed opportunities also come some time to each one who has permitted them to lapse?

The more nearly we grow like Jesus in spirit the more shall we love what is our duty; it will not be duty only, but happiness in its deepest and best sense. Even the *saddest* calls of duty are redeemed by this wonderful gift of happiness to him who truly loves God. See the joy with which martyrs have gone to the stake.

We should never look for praise for doing our duty. For what *is* our duty? It is what is *due* from us,—what we *owe*, or *ought* to do; so that we are bound always to do it, and nothing less will satisfy us at all. We can never do anything *beyond* our duty, strictly speaking; because all that our consciences hint to us to do as something good, we become morally bound to do from the moment we recognize it as good, and as possible for us to do. The Catholic doctrine of "Counsels of Perfection" and "Works of Supererogation," meant that there

was a possibility not only of doing our whole duty, but that it was possible to do *more;* and the good deeds done over and beyond what was required of men were stored up as an extra supply upon which to draw. But Jesus says, "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do."

If we try always to do our duty, however hard or disagreeable it may seem, we shall find that things that once presented themselves as duties turn into pleasures too after a time. In some cases one feels that it would be much harder *not* to do our duty than to do it. The more we approach to the spirit of Jesus, the more constantly will this be the case. In a perfect being, duty or right and happiness *must* go together always; but we can only attain to anything like it by struggles, and resistance to temptations. This is the "glorious liberty of the children of God;"—being set free from bondage to all wrong desires: *these* are captivity; we are chained by them and kept from right actions. Jesus said it was his "*meat*" to do God's will; it was what he lived on, what supported his life and gave him strength. This freedom, this "meat," is what we have all to try and gain: to make it our one life-long endeavour to live only to do God's will.

The secret of strength lies in true love to God. How are we to gain this? To answer this, some people would enumerate all that God has done for

us: but is this the only or chief reason of love to God? Do we always love best those who have done most for us? Is the love we have for our friends in consequence of what they have done for us; because they have been kind and good to *us?* We love them for something much better and deeper than this. This would be only a form of selfishness. We love them for what they *are;* and if they have been good to us, that goodness may excite our love the more, not because it was shown to *us,* but because it is an expression and sign of the goodness and generosity and nobleness living in our friend. It is *himself* that we love. Gratitude for benefits is quite apart from love, and may be either combined with it or totally separate from it. In the same way we love God for what He *is,* not for what He has given us and done for us; and if He speaks no audible word to our hearts, it is not that He is silent, but because we have somehow shut up our hearts and consciences, so that the kindlings of reverence do not come near us. "We needs must love the highest when we see it;" and if we do not love God, it must be because we do not know or realize Him. But if we honour our conscience, and try to obey it because it is God's voice, and if we cling to the good and true, and love it above all earthly things, then we may know that at least in some dim faint way we *do* love God; and if we are faithful we shall go on to know Him and love Him more and more. It is in the times when we meet Him, spirit to spirit, that we grow to love

Him. It may be in prayer, or it may be without conscious seeking of our own, that He suddenly seems to visit us with an unspeakable presence: but whenever it is that we so meet Him, it is *then* that our love for God truly begins, and that it grows; and we grow more ready for such another visitation. Is it that God *comes to us* at such times? Is it not rather that through faithfulness or love here our hearts have flung open their doors, as it were; and so God, who is always waiting there, can come in?

When right and duty demand something from us, no friends, however dear, should be able to hold us back from it. If this is so, then we love God best of all, whether we were conscious of it or not. We know that the more our friends urge us to do our duty, even if it takes us apart, or if it leads us into trials or sorrows, or even to death, the more we love and honour them for it; and this shows that the love of goodness (that is, of God) is above all things in our hearts. For those who have not come to this, who yield to pride, or care most for knowledge and learning, or would rather be great or conspicuous than unobtrusively *good*, we cannot tell how they are to be brought to give their supreme love to God: but doubtless He will find some way that we cannot see, and somehow turn their faces towards the light, cutting down their idols and showing them how empty and vain they are.

XXXIX.

CONSCIENCE.

(DEFINITION of conscience by each pupil.)

Instances of how the conscience acts, in a person tempted to do wrong. When out of sight of others.

It forbids him to do wrong. Why? Out of fear of being discovered? or punished? Something besides these. What? *Because it is wrong.* A moral law. To this the conscience is interpreter in us. Conscience cannot *think wrong into right.* We may do wrong still, in *spite* of conscience, but we cannot make it approve what *is* wrong and *remains* wrong whatever we do.

(See the story of Cranmer, in Froude's History, vol. vi. pp. 372–376 and 413–430.)

Conscience tells us to do right, and resist the wrong. This, again, is in its function of interpreter of the moral law. The feeling given by the resistance of a temptation is a feeling of peace and thankfulness, in its deeper form, rather than a self-regarding one, such as self-satisfaction or complacency.

(Some of the temptations to be resisted are to

anger, ill temper, untidiness, carelessness, thoughtlessness, laziness, untruthfulness, cowardice, selfishness, etc., etc.)

The feeling brought by yielding to the wrong is one of shame; it varies in intensity, like the other, and is of every shade from dissatisfaction and discomfort, which even in their slighter forms bring an impossibility of being happy and at ease in anything, to the deeper darkness of shame and remorse. If doing wrong brings us outward success, yet the success does not bring with it the delight and satisfaction which belongs to success brought by doing right; whereas outward *troubles* brought by doing right have a sort of calm and peace about them which are all their own, and belong to an unclouded conscience. (See, as illustrations, the stories of many martyrs: and the peace of many sufferers for conscience' sake.) The wrong-doer is not let alone by his conscience; he is ill at ease, and expects that somehow punishment will find him out.

(See the story of Adam and Eve, of Joseph's brethren, etc.)

The guilt of doing wrong does not depend on the amount of harm done: the guilt is in the *intention:* see the result of Joseph's being sold; yet the brothers meant to do harm and not good; their guilt was the same, though all things worked together for good.

If "harm" follows what we do, it does not follow that we have purposely done wrong, or prove

that we were wicked. We may make a mistake, and in meaning to do only good we may do harm. In this case the intention was good, and we can only be blamed for our mistake, and there is no moral lapse as in the case when we knew the right and did the wrong. We may do harm accidentally. Is our sorrow alike for what we did which brought harm intentionally and unintentionally? There is a great difference. The first is repentance and remorse; sorrow for bad intentions and wicked feelings, *besides* the sorrow for the harm done: the second is regret that we did not see and know before, and sorrow for the harm done, but nothing further.

We may also be sorry for carelessness and thoughtlessness: there are sins of *o*mission as well as *com*mission; such as negligence of duties, either inward and spiritual, or outward and connected with other people.

We cannot measure a person's goodness by the external good which his actions seem to do. Large sums of money may be given, and do a great deal of good, yet represent no real goodness; or, on the other hand, the smallest possible gift may represent the highest generosity and goodness. (See the story of the widow's mite.) A child may give up his toys, or his pleasures, etc., to another under compulsion, or willingly and of his own accord. The same outward act may be done from very different feelings and motives. The difference of means and of powers must always be borne in

mind. One person's opportunities of doing good (outward or inward) are great, and another's are small. If a man does *what he can* he may be called "good," even if he seems to do very little. Of any man's possibilities God alone can truly judge.

In defining "goodness" in a person it is not enough to take the negative side: it is not merely the absence of wish or purpose to do wrong; it is positive, and active, the desire and purpose to do right, and to do all that he *can* do to bring about good to others.

A "good intention" or purpose is not a passive *wish* for the good of others. We must be ready to deny ourselves, to risk ourselves, and to bear hardness to help others: ready also to die for truth and right, if need be. (See the stories of such martyrs as Hooper, Rogers, and others: Froude's History, vol. iv. pp. 315–325: and of Hunter, pp. 334–337: and of Ridley and Latimer, pp. 379–389.)

We are apt to plan (with "good intentions") what we *would* do if we were in other situations, or if we were like some one else. How do we know what we should do then? What is the surest way to find out? "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much." If we yield to temptations *now*, so we should *then*. We often feel our ordinary duties too small to matter much, and we think that if only we might shake them off and do something *great*, it would be worth living for. We feel as if we had the power in us to do and be

something great; it is only this little everyday round of very small things that frets us, and which we cannot bear.

But the fact is that it is just these very things which are our education, and we must learn not only to tolerate them, but in some sense to *love* them, before we are really fit for the great things; love them at least for God's sake, and duty's, if we cannot do so for their own. In all things we must rise by steps: we learn our letters before we can read the noblest books; we must learn our notes before we can play the divinest music; we must draw kettles and cups and saucers before we can paint fine pictures.

Wickedness and evil does not always show itself fully in actions. Some are kept away by circumstances from temptations which they would yield to if they fell in their way; some *want* to do worse things than they have opportunity for, or means for; some are prevented by fear of being found out.

Can we call a person in any sense "good" who does right for fear of detection if he did wrong?

Can we be ever quite sure that if we had been brought up in the same way, and exposed to the same temptations, we might not have been as bad as those we condemn? (See John viii. 3–11.)

Where is the test and proof to be found of our real goodness or evil? Everyday life, and what we call "little things,"—these show what we are, and prove in what way we should act when greater

things come to test us. In these "little things" we may act from fear of detention, or from fear of public opinion; and as great courage and goodness and firmness of character are often needed to resist and overcome *little* temptations as large ones. These show our real moral worth.

> "The trivial round, the common task,
> Would furnish all we ought to ask,
> Room to deny ourselves, a road
> To bring us daily nearer God."

The only rule to judge our own or others' actions by is the motive or principle. "Motive" means what moves us,—makes us do or not do. There is a "motive" to the smallest as well as the greatest deed, and in this resides the moral value of the deed. The motive which must be our guide to live by is Right *as* right. Sin is to be avoided because it *is* sin, and not from any lower consideration. Our interpreter and guide is conscience, which will never desert us unless we desert it.

All men have a conscience originally; and there are some broad principles of right and wrong upon which all men would agree; *e.g.* that to cheat, lie, steal, or murder is wrong. But there are a great number of things on which people's opinions differ widely. Take as an example the persecutions which have taken place in many countries and times. The persecutors thought themselves in the right, and thought they were acting from conscience (at least in many instances).

Though people agree on the broad principles, they are very apt not to carry them out in detail: *e.g.* in trade; the sale of bad things; adulterations; false weights and measures; honesty in business, etc.: and it is thought enough if a bankrupt just pays his five shillings in the pound, or whatever it may be. Even though not *legally*, he is *morally* responsible for the whole, and should never rest till it is paid. (See a sermon by James Martineau, "Owe no man anything.")

But if persecutions and other wrongs come from obedience or supposed obedience to conscience, how can we be sure of our conscience leading us right?

We must avoid narrowness and exclusiveness; we must be careful not to shut our minds against anything because we do not like it or are afraid of it, or dread what it may lead to; we must try to be open to conviction, and ready to receive and welcome good from all sides, and courageous and firm in always acting up to our conscience, as far as it tells us. Those who persecuted had their minds preoccupied by a preconceived set of doctrines which they imagined wholly necessary for every man to believe, and they never thought that there could be *any* good beyond; nor did they consider that those they persecuted had as good a right to judge as they: neither did they see that by torturing the poor bodies of men they could never reach their souls and consciences, which are *un*bodily; and that though they might wring agonized concessions from the body, or kill it, they

could never so touch or change or harm the unreachable soul.

The way of educating the conscience is to use it. All powers, both in mind and body, are strengthened by use. A man cast on a desert island without companions loses the power of articulate speech (see the story of "Enoch Arden," by Tennyson). A person shut up long in the dark takes a long time to regain the proper use of his eyes. If we sit very long in one position we grow stiff, and feel as if we had lost the use of our limbs. A wounded limb bound up and thrown out of use, only gradually and by using it regains its power. In the same way the conscience loses its power if not used and exercised. It is a duty to cultivate any powers we have. If a child has a talent for drawing or music, we all say it would be a shame not to cultivate that power. So also (and far more, because it is a more important and essential gift or talent) it is a shame not to cultivate the powers of conscience.

People often rush hotly into things they wish to do without troubling themselves to think whether they are right or wrong,—without using their conscience at all: or they adopt plans for their interest or convenience without troubling to find out whether they are equally for the advantage of others. (Illustration of this may be found in the question of the slave-trade; its excuses: the right and wrong of it.)

Conscience speaks the more, and the more

clearly, the more we obey it: it becomes a habit to listen to it and consult it. In cultivating it influences around have an immense effect, both to grown people and children. Books are one of the most powerful of all influences, and it is of the greatest consequence what we read or neglect to read. So also of companions; our associates have more influence over us than we can at all estimate, for good or for evil. Careful and earnest parents and guardians place children whose consciences are young and tender amongst those who can lead them right; and they avoid putting them with those who will give them bad habits and naughty ideas, or who will treat them unwisely.

To treat a small sin as if it were a large one will often destroy a child's conscience on that point; will prevent his seeing how wrong it *really* was, by making it out to have been a great deal larger than it was. It is equally bad for a child to have too little or too much made of a sin. Making too little of it encourages him to be careless of the voice of his conscience: making too much of it crushes his conscience by oppressing it with more than it can recognize as true and just. If children who have been taught to think strictly of right and wrong are put amongst less strict companions, they often get laughed at, and called "lecturers," or "hypocrites," for their sterner sense of duty; if they are at all weak, this often overcomes them and makes them more weak, causing them to yield and act against what they know to be right. Gradually they may

be led to think more and more lightly of sin, till they care very little for right any more. To disobey the commands or hints of conscience once, deadens it for the next time. The greatest criminal may have begun by only just neglecting to obey his conscience, and so growing gradually worse and more and more dead. Men sometimes go so far as to seem to love the evil best: evil seems to have a strange strong sort of attraction to some,—far stronger than good. Jesus says, "But if the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness?" If the only guide that is in you be a *wicked* guide, where is the end to the depths to which you may descend?

Our consciences are often silent on some points because we encourage them to be so. Such are waste of our time, bad habits of feeling or of speaking, etc., etc. We do not *wish* to do otherwise than we do,—at least not at present,—so we do not listen to the voice of our consciences; we silence them. Conscience cannot (we hope) ever be quite killed out; even the worst people can generally be touched *somewhere*, if we only can find the point and do it rightly. If we refuse to hear our consciences whilst we have constant opportunities, what an awful awakening will it be some time when we learn the full extent and enormity of our wrong;—the positive wrong done, and, added to this, the blinding of ourselves to it, and the refusal to attend to conscience. Suffering often brings men "to themselves," as we say. The very phrase shows a

belief that the wickedness is *not* "themselves," but something from which they must be recovered and brought to a natural state. A small thing will be sufficient to recall one in whom the hardening process has not gone far. Jesus *looked* at Peter, and the full measure of his sin rushed in upon him. David's simple story of the ewe lamb brought Nathan to conviction.

Criminals often confess their guilt just before they die. Why is this? They do not *hope* anything by confessing; they know that they must die and will die. It is just an irresistible impulse of conscience.

When our conscience has told us what we ought to do, we *must* try to obey it. The mere fact of our having heard its warning *binds* us to do as it bids us. If we do wrong we have no right to excuse ourselves; we must try and look on our sin as we should if another had committed it. We often try to blind ourselves and others to the right and wrong of an act, by excuses; but the *reality* of the sin remains, and God will see it just the same.

The most terrible punishment of sin is a deadening of the higher parts of our nature: persistence in conscious sin draws a film over the soul, and prevents our seeing clearly any more: in living to sin we die to good; *in proportion* as we live to sin we die to good, and in proportion as we live to good we die to sin.

If the companionship and example of good men helps to quicken our consciences and make us better, so the knowledge and companionship of the best

and noblest men of the past may also quicken us; and learning to know and get close to Jesus most of all. We all know how it does us good to be with some people; how they seem to kindle us up, and make us indifferent to ridicule, trouble, or anything of the sort, if we can only struggle on to be better and grow nearer to them.

People often say that they *must* do things because others do: but they have no business to go by this rule; they ought only to do what is right, and not go by what others do. It is pandering to public opinion. (As an illustration of this, see the matter of dress.) There is no sure guide for us if we use other men as our rule of duty; we have nothing to do (in our actions) with what others do, but must keep our own guide in our conscience. If we allow ourselves to be guided by the opinion of others, what would become of us if we were amongst wicked people?

Good men's consciences bring them to very different opinions as to what is duty. How is this? People often talk about "the truth" as if it were a little thing that we could catch and shut up in a box. It may well be that there is a *part* of the vast ocean of truth in all good men's beliefs, however different they may seem to us to be. It is the same "truth" that they are looking at and striving to gain, but it is like the same mountain seen from different sides: it looks different according to the place you see it from; and only an omniscient eye can blend the different pictures into one

harmonious whole. The only way in which we can hope to reach the truth is by a fearless, good, and earnest life; trying to see each step clearly and to know God's will in it as we come to it.

If we know that by doing something which we know to be right we shall lose the goodwill of men, then we *must* lose it; there is no alternative before us; we must not look to the consequences at all: that is God's affair; *ours* is to follow the only guide He has given us: if we leave that we have no guide at all. Tell a lie to save a friend or for some good purpose. Have we any right to do this? No; though in some cases we may think it excusable, the only safe broad rule is that we must do the right and leave the rest to God. Besides, we do not really know that the "saving" which we tell the lie to insure *will* follow. Cranmer told the lie to save his life, but was put to death notwithstanding. To do evil that good may come is presuming to know better than God, and not trusting His power to work "all things together for good."

If we are persecuted for doing right we can only *bear* it. It is the one chance that we have of showing whether we really love God and truth and goodness better than ourselves, if we can bear ill repute, a bad name, or persecution unjustly inflicted, bravely and cheerfully for God's sake, when men seem to desert us. We *can* do this if we love God with all our might and soul and strength, and never yield to what we know to be wrong.

XL.

THANKSGIVING.

See Frances Power Cobbe's "Religious Duty," chapter on Thanksgiving, of which the following is chiefly an abstract.

It is strange how small a part thanksgiving plays in the worship of churches and chapels. The story of the ten lepers is repeated constantly, and for ten prayers there is only one thanksgiving. For all we see, receive, possess, feel, we seldom offer up a grateful thought: for helps in our outward life, for peaceful home and native land, for just laws and good government,—for all these, if we once realized what they are, and what we should be without them, we might surely raise our hearts in gratitude far oftener than we do. If God did not love us, but only gave us what was *necessary* for our existence; if we had food, but it had no taste; if sounds had no sweetness, odours no perfume, sights no colour; if we had light enough to sow and reap, but no sunshine, no moon or stars; and if from such a life we could then be transported

into such a world as this, should we not *then* find enough to thank Him for?

Besides all these and endless other gifts, have we not the gift of everlasting life? This cannot be realized now: if it could, perhaps the wonder and glory of it would overwhelm us, and unfit us to plod on in this life. But yet is it not one thing more which, even when dimly felt, should rouse our thanksgivings?

Punishments for our sins: these too are some of our best blessings. As the *necessaries* of existence are God's instrument to bring us onward and upward by affording a ground for the moral life, and as the *luxuries* are so by warming and encouraging the better sentiments of our nature, proving God's tender care, and offering opportunities of self-sacrifice for others,—so *sufferings* are amongst our best blessings, healing our sinful hearts. Hereafter, when we look back to earth, we shall probably thank God most fervently for these very sufferings. Sunny memories will fade before the recollections of some sick bed, some grave, or some sufferings which helped us to atone for sins which we have committed. Without suffering could there be any joy? For penitence, for aspiration, for the softened heart after the hardened conscience, who can thank God enough? and who can count the value of these?

Would it not be only right that God should receive gratitude in return for all this?

How shall we show our gratitude and thank-

fulness? If we feel it, it will show itself. God only wants us to feel it and then He will see it.

It will make us absolutely *content and cheerful;* not *resigned,* but content. Resignation is *bearing,* when we can do no more than bear, without complaint, and wishing to *bear well:* it may mount higher, into the resigning our will utterly into God's hands: but it is not for those who are loaded every day with God's gifts to talk of resignation. We may imagine other things which we have not and should like: we may yearn for larger spheres of action, or more tender bonds of human love; we may chafe against fetters of weakness, or poverty, or pain, or unkindness: but cannot we believe that if out of a hundred gifts God withholds *one,* it is not out of forgetfulness or niggardliness? He makes us "as blest as we can *bear,*" and are we to be only resigned? Cannot we thank Him with a full heart for the ninety-nine, without bewailing the hundredth?

May we not thank God also for the dumb creatures that cannot thank Him for themselves?

"The birds can warble, and the young lambs can bleat, but we can open our lips in His praise, we can speak of all His goodness. Therefore we will thank Him for ourselves, and we will thank Him for those that cannot speak." (Barbauld's Hymns in Prose II. See also I. and VII.)

XLI.

PRAYER.

See Frances Power Cobbe's "Religious Duty," chapter on Prayer, of which the following is chiefly an abstract.

THE law of the Spirit is that light and strength are bestowed by God on man according as the latter places himself further from or nearer to their source. As the plant which is sickly, weak, and white, growing in the darkness, acquires health and verdure when we bring it into the sunshine, so the prayer for spiritual good is the direct means by which our virtue may be helped to grow and increase, in accordance with the fixed laws of Providence. God is our Father: He is the sun that lights our life: when our life is faint and feeble and we seek the sunshine, it revives and renews our strength. Even human friends aid us in the same way, if our spirits are in harmony with theirs: our strength is more than doubled in communion. Still more so is it in communion with God. If our best human friends are eager longing to help us on, and give us all that

lies in their power, of strength, and guidance, and comfort, and hope, must not it be so infinitely more with God, as He is infinitely greater, better, and more loving? He has left us free to *ask* His aid or not: but when the heart of His child turns to Him to ask it, He is ever ready to give it.

Only two things are necessary for prayer: earnestness, and a will struggling to obey in all things the will and law of God. The soul must act with all its strength, and strain every faculty before the deepest prayer can begin: nothing short of this is the highest prayer. But sometimes we are unable to attain to this state; we are weak or weary, and are really unable to collect and concentrate our powers and strength upon the act which yet we want to perform, and the communion upon which we yet long to enter. Then we may still lift our eyes to God with that longing or trusting gaze which He will yet accept as worship.

We cannot pray if we have a single sin, however small, *which we do not intend to renounce,* hidden away. A course of action not wholly upright or honourable; feelings not entirely kind and loving; habits not spotlessly chaste and temperate; a kind act which we might but do not mean to perform; some pleasure that we ought but do not intend to give up; one resentful feeling,—these will, any of them, bar the way and prevent our praying. "Leave there thy gift upon the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother;" this is absolutely true of prayer: till this is done we can-

not hope to lift the veil of prayer. But when time, or such reparation as is within our reach, or some direct influence of softening or humiliation has melted the hard and resentful or wilful feeling, we can pray truly, and pray too in sincerity for him who has offended against us. Whilst our will is not ready to enter into contest with all unholy desires, and never to yield till they are conquered, we cannot hope to pray. The conquest need not necessarily *be accomplished* first, but the will must be fully resolved and ready: then prayer will give us fresh arms for the fight. We must use our *own* strength to its utmost, else it is idle to ask for God's.

Prayer for others. Prayer for those we love is a natural intuition. We cannot tell *how* our prayer may help another; but we feel sure that in praying for spiritual good for those we love we are asking what God wishes also: it cannot therefore be otherwise than good to yield to the impulse.

May our prayers not also follow behind the veil of death the souls for whom we had asked God's blessing here?

The place and time of prayer and worship. Prayer may be and should be in any place and at any moment when the soul is stirred. But in addition to this, the fact that certain times and places have been in all ages acknowledged as specially fitting for prayer, binds us in one long chain into one family in earth and heaven. The morning, when we begin our life and work anew;

the night, when we give ourselves over to sleep and helplessness, and leave ourselves, like little children, in our Father's care; Sunday, when we leave our work,—when we cease to be ploughmen, sempstresses, shoemakers, etc., and become men and women;—these are times when we join together in one brotherhood to recognize our common Father, and to worship Him in our several ways. Sunday is a day for moral and spiritual growth and expansion, a day set aside to learn more and more of God's ways, and of His noblest children, and of His workings in and through them. It is truly a "Lord's day."

XLII.

SELF-CONSECRATION.

See Frances Power Cobbe's "Religious Duty," chapter on Self-Consecration, of which the following is chiefly an abstract.

If we desire to live a holy life we must consecrate ourselves to God, and here and now seek and serve and love God with all our heart and soul and strength. We must sanctify our lives and our whole will, till we are one with God; dedicate ourselves to God, and feel that all we are and have is given to Him.

As God is higher and holier than any other being, so our love for Him must be the summing up of all the holiest and grandest feelings of our natures.

Those who are so unhappy as to have few to love, and to love very little, may think that it is a matter of course that we love God *best:* but God does not want us to love Him best by loving others *little.* He has given us to each other to love with a undying love. Some have thought this strong

love, which they have called love of the *creature* instead of the *Creator*, a temptation and snare; they have tried to extinguish their love for their friends that they might love God alone; they have thought the two inconsistent, and they have shut themselves out from the world that they might have no one to love but God; not seeing that, as God has put all that is good and noble and lovable into our friends, it would be *failing* to love Him if we did not love them. But our love for our friends is like steps by which we climb upwards, nearer to God: we long and try to be better, that we may be nearer our friends and more worthy to be loved by them, and more like them; and so it is in reality no hindrance, but a grand *help* towards loving God. Sometimes we seem for the first time really to know and love God because He speaks to us in our friend. We can never love our friends too much: we may love them in wrong ways, but never too much. We may love them selfishly, wishing to keep their whole hearts ourselves, and being jealous when they love others; or we may make pleasing them the end and aim of our acts, instead of looking *through* their love of right to God who gave it to them, and judging our deeds by *His* standard and not *theirs*; or we may love them idolatrously, keeping down our moral ideal to the level of their defects: but all this is not true love, but weakness and foolishness. The selfishness and idolatry are like parasites which stunt and dwarf the main plant. There is no possibility of any being in the universe ever feeling to

much of true, pure, tender, unselfish love. It is *more* that we want, and not less.

How then shall the love of God be chief? Love is not a fixed quantity, like a coin that we can divide amongst so many and no more. It is like a flame which spreads on and on; and the more is given it to burn, the brighter it burns and the more it spreads, always increasing, never taking brightness from one part to give it to another. The more truly we love one person the more are we *able* to love others; and the more we love our friends the more are we able and drawn to love God. If a friend tried to absorb *all* our love to himself, wishing us to love no one but him, we should think him very selfish. Can God be selfish then, and wish us not to love others, in order that He may have all our love? Clearly we must never attribute to God any sentiments or deeds that we could feel to be wrong or selfish in men.

Self-consecration must be carried through all we do. We must choose the right course in temptation, even if it is alone and if it seems to lead us into the dark,—if we are deserted or ridiculed by others. We cannot hope to grow near to God if we flinch,—if we fly like cowards when the battle comes near. We must be wholly conscientious, not shirking or half doing our work; in all things we must rise up to our highest knowledge of what is right and good. All our talents and time and possessions and worldly wealth are given us that we may use them well, and grow higher and better

by the use of them; they are not merely for our amusement, but to do God's work in the world: we are God's labourers, working with His tools, at His work; and if we stop working for Him, and turn His tools to work for ourselves, we must not wonder if in due time God should overturn our little selfish works, and bid us join again in the greater work which He gave us the tools to accomplish.

All this leads us up to a doctrine of *sacrifice* as a natural and integral part of self-consecration. In all religions sacrifice has taken a large place, though its forms are very different, taking every shape from heathen sacrifices to Christian self-sacrifice. Sacrifice now and amongst us does not come from the belief that we must grant something to God's demands, to appease His wrath or gain His favour, but is a voluntary offering up of something we care for at the call of a higher duty. In sacrifice of some vicious desire must all virtue and religion begin; and in sacrifice, the entire and final sacrifice of body and soul, must all virtue and religion culminate. As a real love to a human friend finds expression in the willing sacrifice of wishes, of comfort, of ease, of pleasure, of time, even of life itself, so a real love to God finds expression not only in the sacrifice of all vicious desires, and all unholy thoughts, but of things not in themselves wrong or harmful, for the sake of others whose needs we can thus serve. Sacrifice is like exercise of the body; it breathes

a spirit of health and purity and unselfishness through the whole soul. But sacrifice is not accomplished in one act of resolve; there are moments of high faith or aspiration when the sacrifice is seen and resolved on: but *then* all is easy: the real trial comes when the flush of resolve and prayer has passed, and we are left in the chilly fogs of common life to *carry out* the sacrifice which burnt with so bright a flame before our soul. "We are called thus to choose the narrow way in the noontide of spiritual light, and to tread it when our sun lies hid beneath the horizon of immediate consciousness. Who envies not Curtius leaping down the Forum's gulf while yet the sunlight glittered on his crest, and the shout of Rome redeemed rung through the echoing abyss? Who shudders not at his destiny when he lies mangled in the silent depths of the terror-haunted pit, waiting in his living grave the slow release of death? It was not when God's angel-thoughts were around Jesus, and he took freely his cup of agony from his Father's hand, that he achieved his everlasting crown. It was when the death-darkness mounted slowly up the cross, till heart and brain grew dim, and God's face was hid, and the cry burst from his soul, 'Why hast Thou forsaken me?' And in other and lesser martyrdoms it is true that the sacrifice lies in the slow completion of the self-abnegation, and not in the first oblation. When the exile for conscience'

sake stands on the heaving deck, still beholding his loved ones waving their last farewell, and feeling their tears yet warm upon his cheek, his sacrifice is but prepared. When the long years of mind and heart solitude have stolen the vigour from his brain, and filled with sickly longings the void in his affections; when the weary life is drawing to a weary close,—*then* if his soul be kneeling still, laying *willingly* still its great gift on the altar, then is his sacrifice truly made to God. And thus, too, must be fulfilled all sacrifices, freely, cheerfully, *to the end;* for it is *in the perseverance* that lies the sacrifice. And herein, too, may lie its joy and glory. Each moment that the soul resists the temptation to regret, and renews in spirit its vow of sacrifice as freely as at first, it actually accomplishes its act of virtue: it is marching forward in its path, and not merely, as it sometimes seems, standing still on the barren rock whither a wave of resolution has borne it."

The greater part of the evil of the world comes rather from the *incompleteness* of men's choice of virtue than from deliberate choice of vice. We wish to be good "*some time:*" like St. Augustine we say, "Make me holy, *but not yet.*" We should like to make a sacrifice, but with a *reservation.* We make partial sacrifices, but withhold the total one. We slip back when the total self-surrender should come. "It is said that a man may walk unhurt through a furnace-chamber, wherein if he place one

limb alone it will be scorched to tortures. Thus do we feel double pain in the sacrifices which are but partial, and in which our whole heart never enters, and whereby therefore it is never warmed. If we would but give ourselves wholly to God—give up, for the present and the future, every act, and, above all, every thought and every feeling, to be all purified to the uttermost, and rendered the best, noblest, holiest we can conceive—then would sacrifice bear with it a peace rendering itself far *easier* than before."

Why should we look upon such self-sacrifice for God's sake as anything very great or wonderful? Self-sacrifice is the natural language of love: for our human friends and relations we are glad to make any sacrifices:—fathers, mothers, sons and daughters, friends, are ready to die for each other, or to make the countless daily sacrifices which are happily so common, out of love for each other. "We do not merely think, 'In such circumstances I would die for my friend,' but actually, 'I wish that such circumstances *would* arise, that I *might* die so blessedly.' Sacrifice is simply *love in action* —the universal and spontaneous language of the sentiment in its intensity. Let us but love God aright, and the willingness to offer ourselves, 'soul and body'—the reasonable, holy, and acceptable 'sacrifice'—must, according to the laws of our nature, arise in our hearts. . . . Each sacrifice *solved on* opens wider the gate of prayer: each

sacrifice *accomplished* is a step towards the paradise within. . . . Let us but labour, and pray, and wait, and the intervals of human frailty shall grow shorter and less dark, the days of our delight in God longer and brighter, till at last life shall be nought but His love; our eyes shall never grow dim, His smile never turn away."

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